THE

MORALS

OF

CONFUCIUS,

A

Chineſe Philoſopher,

Who flouriſhed above five Hundred Years before the coming of CHRIST. Being one of the choiceſt Pieces of Learning remaining of that Nation.

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PREFACE.

THE following ſheets contain an epitome of all the morals of CONFUCIUS the CHINESE philoſopher, which is very ſmall, if we reſpect the number of pages which compoſe it; but it is doubtleſs very great, if conſideration be had to the importance of the things therein contained.

WE may ſay that the morals of this philoſopher are infinitely ſublime, but at the ſame time ſenſible, and drawn from the pureſt fountains of natural reaſon. Certainly, a reaſon deſtitute of the lights of divine revelation, has never appeared with ſo much illumina-

tion and power. And as there is not any duty omitted by CONFUCIUS, ſo there is not any beſides thoſe here mentioned. He greatly extends his morals, but not farther than neceſſary; his judgment ever telling him how far he muſt go, and where he muſt ſtop.

HE has a very conſiderable advantage, not only over a great number of pagan writers, that have treated of things of this nature, but likewiſe over ſeveral chriſtian authors, who abound with ſo many falſe, or over-ſubtile thoughts; who almoſt every where ſurpaſs the bounds of their duty, and who give themſelves up to their own fancy, or ill-humour; who almoſt always digreſs from that juſt mean, where virtue ought to be placed; who, by their falſe portraitures do render it impoſſible

to our practice, and who conſequently make few virtuous men.

THE author DE LA MANIERE DE BIEN PENSER DANS LES OUVRAGES D'ESPRIT, who to a ſtile extreamly polite and exact, always adds an exquiſite judgment, very well remarks the weakneſs and falſity of theſe words of a late writer: 'Every one endeavours to 'poſſeſs the moſt room he can in his 'own imagination, and promotes and 'aggrandizes himſelf in the world, only 'to augment the idea which every one 'has of himſelf.' Behold the end of all the ambitious deſigns of men. ALEXANDER, CÆSAR, &c. had no other proſpect in all their battles than this.

INDEED, ALEXANDER and CÆSAR might in their battles have meditated on their interiour image, and although the thought then had, might prove

true in ſome occurrence, yet it could not be ſo in the extent that was given it. There is therefore nothing worſe thought than what he utters, who has compoſed the firſt treatiſe of the moral eſſays, and whoſe words we have juſt mentioned.

WHAT the author of theſe eſſays lays down at firſt, and which he who compoſes the excellent dialogues already mentioned, would not take the pains to revive, is almoſt of this ſtamp; it is even ſomewhat worſe, to which very little attention is required. 'I conceive,' ſaith he, 'that he who at firſt ſtiled him-'ſelf, HIGH AND MIGHTY LORD, look-'ed upon himſelf as born upon the 'heads of his vaſſals, and that it is this 'that he means by this epithet HIGH, 'ſo little ſuitable to the vileneſs of 'men.'

WHAT ſignifies all this? or rather, how dares one from a ſerious and grave air to advance things of this nature? What is meant by theſe words, 'I imagine, that he who at the firſt ſtiled 'himſelf, HIGH AND MIGHTY LORD, 'looked upon himſelf as advanced o-'ver the heads of his vaſſals." Theſe words can have but two ſenſes; the one proper, the other figurative. The proper and natural ſenſe is, that this Lord imagined that his feet were reſted on the heads of his vaſſals, and that he walked upon their heads or higher; and that to ſee and command them, he was forced to look down. The figurative ſenſe is, that this Lord thought himſelf advanced in authority over his vaſſals, and that his rank and power were much more conſiderable than theirs. It is evident, that unleſs this Lord had loſt his

wits, he could not imagine what the firſt ſenſe ſignifies; and as for the ſecond, which is figurative, it is very true: this Lord had reaſon 'to conſider 'himſelf as advanced above his ſub-'jects,' it was his right to aſſume titles which denoted his power and authority, and he did no more than what thoſe, whom GOD has ordained to command others, have always done. GOD himſelf, in his ſcriptures, calls them GODS, which is much more than HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS. So theſe other words, 'this epithet of HIGH is ſo unſuitable 'to the lowneſs of men,' are no more intelligible than the former.

THESE places, which we have obſerved, are not the only ones of this nature, which are founded in moral eſſays. There are infinite others ſuch like. And

not to go from the firſt treatiſe, can theſe poſſibly be ſolid?

'ALTHOUGH men ſhould have made 'great progreſs therein,' (the author ſpeaks of the knowledge of things) 'they would hardly be the more eſti-'mable; ſeeing that theſe barren ſci-'ences are ſo incapable of bringing a-'ny fruit, and ſolid contentment to 'them, that one is as happy in rejecting 'them at firſt, as in carrying them by 'long ſtudy, to the higheſt pitch they 'can be carried.

'WE are only capable of knowing one 'ſingle object, and one ſingle truth at 'once. The reſt remains buried in 'our memory, as if it was not. Behold 'therefore our knowledge reduced to 'a ſingle object.

'WHO is he that is not convinced, 'that it is a baſeneſs to think himſelf

'valuable becauſe he is well clad, well 'horſed, that he hath juſtly directed a 'ball, and walks with a good grace?"

WHAT! do not the ſciences and excellent diſcoveries render a man more happy, content, and complaiſant, when he underſtands the right uſe thereof? Is it not well known, that there are many divines, who are of opinion, that one of the things which will compleat the happineſs of the ſaints in heaven, will be a great knowledge of an infinite number of truths which are unknown to us upon earth? Is it becauſe our ſpirit can at the ſame time meditate only upon one ſingle object, that it thence follows, that all the knowledge of an experienced man is limited to this ſingle object, that he knows no other.

'BEHOLD therefore our knowledge 'reduced to a ſingle object.' In fine, is

it a baſeneſs for a knight, or courtier, to think he ſhall be the more eſteemed, if he does what is ſuitable to his rank; if among other things, he is properly habited, well horſed, and walks with a good grace? And would he not be truly worthy of contempt, would he not diſcover a meanneſs of mind, if he had unproper habiliments, if he ſhould take no care and pains to be well horſed, if he ſhould ride without any art, or walk like a peaſant?

We can aver, that in this abridgment of Confucius's morals, nothing will be found like what we have remarked. We ſhall here ſee moral eſſays, which are maſter-pieces. Every thing herein is ſolid; becauſe that right reaſon, that inward verity, which is implanted in the ſoul of all men, and which our philoſopher inceſſantly conſulted with-

out prejudice, guided all his words. Thus the rules which he preſcribes, and the duties to which he exhorts, are ſuch, that there is no perſon which does not immediately give his approbation thereunto. There is nothing of falſity in his reaſonings, nothing extream, none of thoſe frightful ſubtilties, which are obſerved in the moral treatiſes of moſt modern METAPHYSITIANS*, that is to ſay, in diſcourſes where ſimplicity, clearneſs, and perſpicuity ought to prevail throughout, and make itſelf ſenſible to minds of the loweſt rank.

WE ſhall perhaps find this maxim a little relaxed, where CONFUCIUS ſaith, that there are certain perſons whom it is lawful to hate. Nevertheleſs, if the thing be cloſely conſidered, we ſhall

* See *Le traitte de morale de l'auteur de la recherche de la verité.*

find the thought to be juſt and reaſonable. Virtue, indeed, commands us to do good to all men, as CONFUCIUS ſtates it; but it requires not that we ſhould effectually have friendſhip for all ſorts of perſons. There are ſome ſo odious, that it is abſolutely impoſſible to love them; for after all, we only can love good; we naturally have an averſion for what appears extreamly wicked and defective. All that charity obliges us to do on this account, is, to ſhew kindneſs to a perſon, when it is in our power, as if we loved him, notwithſtanding the vices, malice, and great defects, which are diſcovered in him.

SEEING that opportunity offers, we ſhall take notice, that the duty of loving our enemies, which JESUS CHRIST ſo much recommends in his goſpel, is generally too much ſtretched. This du-

ty is very difficult to perform in its juſt extent, without our rendering it yet harder, or rather impoſſible to practiſe, and capable of caſting us into deſpair, and of making us fall into an entire relaxation. The generality of thoſe that explain this duty, do ſpeak as if we were obliged to retain in our hearts a tender amity for all our enemies, how wicked and abominable ſoever they be. Yet, this is not preciſely that which the Son of God requires at our hands, becauſe he demands not things abſolutely impoſſible. His aim is to excite us to behave ourſelves towards our enemies, whoever they be, as we do to them that we love. Indeed, the ſcripture does, in ſeveral places, by 'to love' ſignify, 'to do good', almoſt in the ſame manner as we do to thoſe for whom we have a great affection. If this were a fit occaſion, we

might verify this with ſeveral paſſages. We ſhall ſatisfy ourſelves only with alledging the example of GOD himſelf, which our Saviour propoſes for our imitation. For, after having ſaid, MATTH. 5. 44. 45. 'Love your enemies; bleſs 'them that curſe you; do good to them 'that hate you; and pray for them 'which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſe-'cute you;'(for theſe are all as ſo many 'ſynonymous terms,)he adds, 'that ye 'may be the children of your father 'which is in heaven: for he maketh his 'ſun to riſe upon the evil and on the good, 'and ſendeth his rain on the juſt and on 'the unjuſt.' Now, it is certain, that GOD loves not the wicked and unjuſt, although he may do them good: he has had an extream averſion for a CALIGULA, for a NERO, and other ſuch like monſters; although he has cauſed his ſun

to ſhine, and ſent his rain upon them. But he has dealt with them as if he loved them; and it is after this manner alſo we ought to deport ourſelves towards our enemies. It is not that we are not bound ſincerely to endeavour, what in us lies, to retain in our hearts ſome ſentiments of friendſhip for them; but there are certain perſons ſo lewd, ſo profligate, and ſo abominable, for whom it is impoſſible to have theſe ſentiments. And it is upon this account that the charity is yet greater, more generous, and praiſe worthy, when notwithſtanding that averſion which we cannot hinder ourſelves from bearing to certain perſons, we ceaſe not to do them good upon occaſion, with the proſpect of yielding obedience unto GOD.

IT is here requiſite, for the reader's ſatisfaction, to declare, that the CHI-

NESE, from the beginning of their origin to the times of CONFUCIUS, have not been idolaters; that they have not had either falſe GODS or images; that they have paid adoration only to the Creator of the univerſe, whom they have always called XAM-TI, and to whom their third emperor, named HOAM-TI, erected a temple, which was probably the firſt that was built to GOD. The name of XAM-TI, which they atribute to GOD, ſignifies SOVEREIGN MASTER, or EMPEROR. It is obſervable, that there have been a great many of the CHINESE emperors that have very frequently aſſumed the ſirname of TI, which imports MASTER, EMPEROR, or that of VAM, which ſignifies KING; that there was one prince of the fourth race, who was called XI HOAM TI, the GREAT, or AUGUST EMPEROR; but there is not

found any that has dared to assume the title of XAM, that is to say, SOVEREIGN, and that they have always respectfully left it to the absolute Judge of the universe.

IT is true, that in CHINA, sacrifices have ever been offered to diverse tutelary angels: but in the times which preceded CONFUCIUS, it was in respect of honouring them infinitely less than XAM-TI, the sovereign Lord of the world.

THE CHINESE served GOD with extraordinary pomp and magnificence, but at the same time, with a very modest and very humble behaviour; and said, that all this external worship was in no wise agreeable to the divinity, if the soul was not inwardly adorned with piety and virtue. They highly honour their fathers and mothers, and persons ad-

vanced in age. The women were very virtuous; and in their habits and all their fashions great modesty was observed. The men and women, nobles and peasants, kings and subjects, did greatly esteem sobriety, frugality, moderation, justice, and virtue.

THE religion and piety of the CHINESE continued almost in this state unto the time of the philosopher LI LAO KIUN, who was contemporary with CONFUCIUS, and who first declared there were several GODS. CONFUCIUS put a stop to the torrent of superstition and idolatry, which began to overflow. But in fine, when FOHI's idol was brought from the INDIES, that is to say, sixty-five years after JESUS CHRIST, this torrent so strongly overflowed, that it made an irruption, the sad effects whereof are still seen.

CONFUCIUS inſtructed, as well by his manners and example, as by his precepts: and his precepts are ſo juſt, ſo neceſſary, and propoſed with ſo much gravity, and at the ſame time with ſo much meekneſs and ingenuity, that they muſt needs eaſily inſinuate into their hearts, and produce great effects therein.

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PART FIRST.

Of the Antiquity and Philoſophy of the CHINESE.

ALTHOUGH in this little work our deſign is only to relate what is moſt remarkable in CONFUCIUS's books, yet we are o-

bliged to ſpeak of ſome books which have appeared in CHINA before this philoſopher. But this being not to be done without reflecting a little backward, we will ſay ſomething concerning the origin and antiquity of the CHINESE.

THE CHINESE chronologers do almoſt all agree, that FOHI, who began to reign 2952 years before the birth of JESUS CHRIST, was the founder of this monarchy. The CHINESE that have interpreted theſe annals make no difficulty to avow, that whatever is writ concerning CHINA before the reign of this emperor is fabulous and ſuſpicious: and one of their moſt renowned hiſtorians, named TAISUCUM, frankly confeſſes, that he is ignorant of what paſſed before the reign of XINUM, the ſucceſſor of FOHI. There are only certain annals which the CHINESE call the GREAT

ANNALS, wherein the thing is otherwiſe read. The author of this prodigious chronology, which contains almoſt an hundred and fifty volumes, reports, that after the creation of the world, there were three emperors: the one of heaven, the other of the earth, and the third of men; that the progeny of this laſt ſucceeded one another for the ſpace of above forty-nine thouſand years; after which, thirty-five imperial families do ſucceſſively reign for ſeveral ages without interruption. This author likewiſe adds, that he juſtifies not what he ſays, and at laſt agrees, that it is more certain to begin with FOHI, and herein to follow the moſt famous and beſt reputed hiſtorians.

IT is not that in FOHI's life they have not inſerted an infinite number of fables, which might cauſe us to queſtion

whether this emperor ever was; for beſides that in the GREAT ANNALS it is read, that FOHI's mother accidentally ſtepping into a place where a giant had paſſed, ſhe was ſuddenly encompaſſed with a rainbow, and that it was at this very moment that ſhe perceived herſelf with child of the founder of the CHINESE monarchy: where it is alſo related that this founder had the head of a man and body of a ſerpent. It is true, that theſe fables being very groſs; the generality of the CHINESE deride them. They report that the ground of this ridiculous tradition was the colour of FOHI's body, which was marked with ſeveral ſpots; or rather, that it was an hieroglyphick, whereby they intended to repreſent this prince, as a prince of extraordinary prudence. But although we had not this conſideration and proſpect,

the genealogy of this king is ſo exact, ſo circumſtantial, and ſo well proſecuted in the chronological tables of the CHINESE, that it is not poſſible to imagine it only a fancy; ſo that there is certainly as little reaſon to deny, or even to queſtion that FOHI ever was, as to maintain that SATURN, JUPITER, HERCULES and ROMULUS, are only names, under pretence that the poets and graveſt hiſtorians have intermixt the hiſtory of their birth with a thouſand impertinent fables.

NEVERTHELESS, theſe very annals, which contain ſo many fables upon the account of FOHI's birth, do ſay nothing of his predeceſſors, and do ſpeak very imperfectly concerning his country; which makes us ſuſpect that he was not born in CHINA, and that he came thither from ſome other place. They only

intimate that he was born in a province called KENSI, where he indeed muſt neceſſarily arrive, ſuppoſing that he came from ſome other part of CHINA: for after the confuſion of tongues, and diſperſion of the people, he muſt come from MESOPOTAMIA, or from the territory of SENNAAR, to land at KENSI, and afterwards arrive in the heart of the country, viz. in the province of HONAN, where it is written that he kept his court.

ALTHOUGH we cannot exactly know at what time FOHI laid the firſt foundations of his empire, yet it is very probable that it was not long after the deluge: for indeed, if we vigorouſly follow the computations of the CHINESE, and chronology of the SEPTUAGINT, it was not till about 200 years after, in a time when NOAH was yet living; ſo

that we may readily believe that he is deſcended from this patriarch by SEM, who, according to the ſentiments of the whole world, had ASIA for his inheritance. And that which more confirms us in our opinion, is, that in the CHINESE language, SEM, which ſignifies to ingender and produce, imports alſo life and ſacrifice. Indeed, it is from NOAH's children, that all men ſince the deluge are deſcended, and have received life, and have learned to offer ſacrifice unto GOD. Whereunto it might be added, that FOHI is by the CHINESE called PAOHI, which ſignifies alſo a victim, becauſe he was the firſt of SEM's poſterity that introduced the ſervices of GOD and uſe of ſacrifices amongſt them.

BUT if we refuſe to adhere to the computations beforementioned, let us

retrench, with their leave, the firſt ſix emperors, whoſe hiſtory cannot in every thing be true, and let us begin to compute only from the ſeventh, viz. from the emperor YAO. For from this emperor's reign, ſo many perſons have by cycles computed and written whatever has paſſed in this kingdom, and have done it with ſo much exactneſs, and ſuch a general uniformity, that we can no more doubt of the truth of their calculation, than of that of the GREEK olympiads. For we ſhall alſo find, according to that computation, that the origin of the CHINESE nation was not long after the flood; for from the time of YAO to the year of this age 1688, it is four thouſand forty and eight years.

THIS being ſo, it muſt neceſſarily follow that the firſt inhabitants of CHINA

had likewiſe the true knowledge of GOD, and of the creation of the world; for the idea of the true GOD and the remembrance of the world's creation continued a long time after the deluge in the minds of men, and even of thoſe that were moſt corrupted, as the poſterity of CHAM for example. Indeed, beſides that in the annals of the CHINESE, a diſcourſe is there made concerning the creation of the world, although after a different method from MOSES's hiſtory, yet it was not poſſible that theſe ideas of the true GOD, which the creation of the world, and after that the deluge, had deeply ingraved in their hearts, could be ſo ſuddenly effaced in ſuch a manner, as that they ſhould fall into idolatry, and follow after other GODS than he that had created them. But the more thoroughly to convince us of what we

have been diſcourſing, it is needful only to conſider the doctrine, ſentiments and manners of the ancient CHINESE, the books of their philoſophers, and eſpecially thoſe of CONFUCIUS. Certainly we ſhall throughout obſerve the excellenteſt morality that ever was taught, a morality which might be ſaid to proceed from the ſchool of JESUS CHRIST.

THE books which the ancient CHINESE have writtten are exceeding numerous, but the chief are thoſe which are called UKIM; that is to ſay, the five volumes, and thoſe intituled SU XU, that is to ſay, the four books.

THE firſt and chiefeſt of theſe five volumes is called XU KIN. It is not neceſſary very amply to diſcourſe of the antiquity of this work; it is ſufficient to ſay, that in peruſing it we find, that

the author wrote a long time before MOSES. At firſt there is ſeen the hiſtory of three great kings, viz YAO, XUN and VU, the laſt of which was the firſt and chief of the family HIA, the moſt conſiderable of all the imperial families; and the two others have been famous lawgivers, and, as it were, the SOLONS of CHINA. Therein is afterwards found the moſt important conſtitutions that were made during the reign of the ſecond family, or imperial houſe called XAM and VU, eſpecially by CHIMTAM, who was the founder thereof, and who arrived at the empire 1776 years before the coming of JESUS CHRIST. In fine, a diſcourſe is there made of the third family, wherein is chiefly related what was ſaid or done moſt remarkable under the government of the five firſt princes, and of the twelfth. There is re-

preſented the hiſtory of VUVAM, who was the chief of this third family, and the lucubrations and inſtructions of the illuſtrious CHEUCUM, the brother of this emperor, who was a prince highly eſteemed, both for his virtue and extraordinary prudence. This whole volume, not to multiply words, is only an hiſtorical relation, and collection of moral maxims, of harangues ſpoken by princes, of ſentences uttered by the mouths of kings, and particular perſons, and of precepts and councils given to princes, wherein ſo much prudence, policy, wiſdom and religion is ſet forth, that they might be given to all chriſtian princes.

THE ſecond volume, which is properly a recital of the cuſtoms and ordinances of almoſt twelve kings, is entitled XI KIM. It is a collection of odes,

and ſeveral other little poems of this nature: for muſick being greatly eſteemed, and much uſed in CHINA, and whatever is publiſhed in this volume having reſpect only to the purity of manners, and practice of virtue, thoſe that wrote it compoſed it in verſe, to the end that every one being enabled to ſing the things therein contained, they might be in every one's mouth. Virtue is there magnified and extolled to the higheſt degree, and there are ſo many things expreſſed after a method ſo grave and wiſe, that it is impoſſible not to admire them. It is very true, that therein is contained things very ridiculous, extravagant hyperboles in favour of certain princes, and murmurings and repinings againſt GOD and heaven: but the moſt judicious interpreters are of opinion, that all this is ſuſpicious; that thoſe to whom they

are attributed are not the authors; that they are not to be credited, as being ſince added. Indeed the other ancient odes, they ſay, contain nothing ridiculous, extravagant, or criminal as appears by theſe words of CONFUCIUS; 'The whole doctrine of the three hundred poems is reduced to theſe few words, SU VU SIE, which import, that we ought not to think any thing that is wicked or impure.'

THE third volume is called YE KIM. In this volume, which is the ancienteſt, if it may be called a volume, nothing but obſcurity and darkneſs is obſerved. FOHI had no ſooner founded his empire, than he gave inſtructions to the CHINESE; but the uſe of characters and writing being unknown, this prince, who could not teach them all with his voice, and who was moreover employed in the

advancement of his growing monarchy, after a long and ſerious conſideration, thought at laſt upon making a table, compoſed of ſome little lines, which it is not neceſſary to deſcribe. The CHINESE being as yet dull and ruſtic, it is probable that this prince laboured in vain; and if it is true, that he accompliſhed his deſign, by the clear and eaſy explications which he himſelf gave for the underſtanding of theſe lines, it happened, at leaſt inſenſibly, that this table became uſeleſs. For it is certain, that after his death nothing could make uſe thereof. Two thouſand years from the foundation of the monarchy were near elapſed, no one being able any way to decypher this myſterious table, when at laſt OEDEPUS was ſeen to appear: it was a prince named VENVAM. This prince endeavoured to penetrate the ſenſe of theſe

lines by a great number of others, which he diſpoſed after different ways; they were new ænigma's. His ſon, viz. CHEUCUM, attempted the ſame thing; but had not the good fortune to ſucceed better. In brief, five hundred years after appeared CONFUCIUS, who endeavoured to unty this GORDIUS's knot. He explained, according to his underſtanding, the little lines of the founder, with the interpretations that had been made before him, and refers all to the nature of beings and elements; to the manners and diſcipline of men. It is true, that CONFUCIUS being arrived at a more advanced age, acknowledged his miſtake, and deſigned to make new commentaries on this ænigmatical work: but death hindered him from fulfilling his reſolution.

To the fourth volume CONFUCIUS has given the title of CHUN CIEU; words

which ſignify the SPRING and AUTUMN. He compoſed it in his old age. He diſcourſes like an hiſtorian of the expeditions of divers princes; of their virtues and vices; of the fatigues they underwent, with the recompences they received. CONFUCIUS deſigned to this fourth volume the title of SPRING and AUTUMN, which is an emblematical title, becauſe ſtates flouriſh when their princes are endued with virtue and wiſdom; which is repreſented by the SPRING; and that on the contrary they fall like the leaves, and are utterly deſtroyed, when their princes are diſpirited, or are wicked, which is repreſented by the AUTUMN.

THE fifth volume, entitled LI KI, or MEMOIRES OF RITES AND DUTIES, is compoſed of two books, the matter of which is extracted by CONFUCIUS out

of ſeveral other books, and of various monuments of antiquity. But about three hundred years after, all the copies of this work being burnt, by the command of a cruel emperor, called XIHOAMTI, and this loſs being impoſſible to be repaired any other way, than by conſulting the moſt aged perſons that might have preſerved any ideas thereof, it is not to be queſtioned that the work is at preſent exceedingly defective, even as the interpreters themſelves acknowledge; there are indeed ſeveral things herein wanting, and a great many others added, which never were in CONFUCIUS's copies. However, in this whole volume, ſuch as it now is, he treats of the rites as well ſacred as prophane, of all ſorts of duties, ſuch as were practiſed in the time of the three families of the princes HIA, XAM and CHEU, but e-

ſpecially of that which reigned in Confucius's time. Theſe duties are thoſe of parents to their children; thoſe of children to their parents; the duties of husband and wife; thoſe of friends, thoſe which reſpect hoſpitality, and thoſe which are neceſſary to be performed at home, or abroad, or at feaſts. He there diſcourſes likewiſe of the veſſels of the ſacrifices, of the victims that were to be offered up to heaven, of the temples to be choſen for that end, of the reſpect we ought to have for the dead, and of their obſequies or funeral rites. In a word, he therein treats of the liberal arts, eſpecially of muſick, of the military art, of the way of lancing a javelin, and guiding a chariot. Behold in brief what the five volumes contain.

The four books, the three firſt of

which are CONFUCIUS's books, where and of we deſign to ſpeak, do comprehen mag the whole philoſophy of the CHINES of at leaſt, whatever this philoſophy ha trut moſt curious and conſiderable. The one explain and more clearly illuſtrate wha plea is writ in the five volumes: and al fan though the authority of the five vo fou lumes be infinitely greater, by reaſo bli of their antiquity, than that of th and four volumes, yet the four volumes ex pri ceed it, for the advantage that may b lov received therefrom. Indeed, beſide M that the CHINESE do thence derive ha their principal oracles, and what they qu believe to be eternal verities; the LI- T TERATI, which are philoſophers that fe follow CONFUCIUS's doctrine, and an which have in their own hands all the th employments of the nation, cannot ar- pr rive at the degree of a philoſopher, an

and conſequently to be mandorims or magiſtrates, without a great knowledge of theſe four books. They are, in truth, under an obligation, to know one of the five volumes, which they pleaſe to chooſe, according to their fancy and inclination: but as for the four books, they are indiſpenſably obliged to know them all four by heart, and thoroughly to underſtand them; the principal reaſons of which are as follow: the firſt is, that CONFUCIUS and MEMCIUS, who writ the fourth book, have collected what is beſt and moſt exquiſite in the works of the ancients. The ſecond is, that they have added ſeveral good things to the diſcoveries and thoughts of their anceſtors. The third, that CONFUCIUS and MEMCIUS propoſe their doctrine after a clearer and politer method than was formerly

done. In fine, it is becauſe that Con-
FUCIUS and MEMCIUS have, in th
four books, avoided the dull and harſ
ſtyle of the ancients, and that by
ſmooth ſtyle, although without prid
and arrogancy, they have added orna
ments to the naked ſimplicity of th
golden age.

WE have nothing to ſay concernin
the fourth book, becauſe that thi
work of MEMCIUS has not as yet ap
peared in EUROPE: but before we pro
ceed to ſpeak of CONFUCIUS, it is ne
ceſſary to publiſh the merit of this phi
loſopher, together with the moſt re
markable paſſages of his life.

CONFUCIUS was born in the king
dom of LOU, which is at preſent th
province of CHAN LONG, in the twen
ty-firſt year of the reign of LING VAN
the twenty-third emperor of the race

of TCHEOU, five hundred and fifty-one years before the birth of CHRIST. He was contemporary with PYTHAGORAS, and a little before SOCRATES. He was but three years old, when he loſt his father TCHO LEANG HE, who had enjoyed the higheſt offices of the kingdom of LONG; he left no other inheritance to his ſon, except the honour of deſcending from TI YE, the twenty-ſeventh emperor of the ſecond race of CHANG. His mother, whoſe name was CHING, and who ſprung originally from the illuſtrious family of the YEN, lived one and twenty years after the death of her husband. CONFUCIUS did not grow in knowledge by degrees, as children ordinarily do, but ſeemed to arrive at reaſon and the perfect uſe of his faculties almoſt from his infancy. He took no delight in playing,

running about, and ſuch amuſements as were proper for his age: he had a grave and ſerious deportment, which gained him reſpect, and plainly foretold what he would one day be. But what diſtinguiſhed him moſt, was his unexampled and exalted piety. He honoured his relations; he endeavoured in all things to imitate his grandfather, who was then alive in CHINA, and a moſt holy man: and it was obſervable, that he never eat any thing, but he proſtrated himſelf upon the ground, and offered it firſt to the ſupreme Lord of heaven.

ONE day, while he was a child, he heard his grandfather fetch a deep ſigh; and going up to him, with many bowings and much reverence, 'may I pre-'ſume, ſays he, without loſing the reſ-'pect I owe you, to inquire into the 'occaſion of your grief? perhaps you

'fear that your poſterity ſhould dege-
'nerate from your virtue, and diſhonour
'you by their vices.' What put this thought into your head, ſays COUM-TSE to him, and where have you learnt to ſpeak after this manner? 'From your-
'ſelf, replied CONFUCIUS; I attend dili-
'gently to you every time you ſpeak; and
'I have often heard you ſay, that a
'ſon, who does not by his virtue ſup-
'port the glory of his anceſtors, does
'not deſerve to bear their name.' After his grandfather's death, CONFUCIUS applied himſelf to TCEM-SE, a celebrated doctor of his time; and under the direction of ſo great a maſter, he ſoon made a vaſt progreſs into antiquity, which he conſidered as the ſource, from whence all genuine knowledge was to be drawn. This love for the ancients very nearly coſt him his life, when he was not more

than ſixteen years of age. Falling into diſ-
courſe one day about the CHINESE books
with a perſon of high quality, who
thought them obſcure, and not worth the
pains of ſearching into, 'The books you
'deſpiſe, ſays CONFUCIUS, are full of
'profound knowledge, which is not to
'be attained but by the wiſe and learn-
'ed: and the people would think cheap-
'ly of them, could they comprehend
'them of themſelves. This ſubordina-
'tion of ſpirits, by which the ignorant
'are dependant upon the knowing, is
'very uſeful, and even neceſſary in ſo-
'ciety. Were all families equally rich,
'and equally powerful, there could not
'ſubſiſt any form of goverment; but
'there would happen a yet ſtranger diſ-
'order, if all men were equally knowing,
'viz. every one would be for govern-
'ing, and none would think themſelves

'obliged to obey. Some time ago, ad-
'ded CONFUCIUS, an ordinary fellow
'made the same observation to me about
'the books as you have done, and from
'such a one indeed nothing better could
'be expected: but I admire that you,
'a doctor, should thus be found speaking
'like one of the lowest of the people.'
This rebuke had indeed the good effect of silencing the mandarin, and bringing him to a better opinion of the learning of his country; yet vexed him so at the same time, as it came from almost a boy, that he had revenged it by violence, if he had not been prevented.

AT the age of nineteen years CONFUCIUS took a wife, who brought him a son, called PE YU. This son died at fifty, but left behind him a son called TSOU-TSE, who, in imitation of his grandfather, applied himself intirely to

the ſtudy of wiſdom, and by his meri
arrived to the higheſt offices of the em
pire. CONFUCIUS was content with hi
wife only ſo long as ſhe lived with him
and never kept any concubines, as th
cuſtom of his country would have allow
ed him to have done, becauſe he though
it contrary to the law of nature. I ſa
ſo long as ſhe lived with him; for, i
ſeems, he divorced her after ſome time
and for no other reaſon, ſay the CHI
NESE, but that he might be free fro
all incumbrances and connexions, and a
liberty to propagate his philoſoph
throughout the empire. At the age o
twenty-three, when he had gained a con
ſiderable knowledge of antiquity, and ac
quainted himſelf with the laws and cuſ
toms of his country, he began to projec
a ſcheme for a general reformation. A
the little kingdoms of the empire depend

upon the emperor; but then every province was a diſtinct kingdom, which had its particular laws, and was governed by a prince of its own. Hence it often happened, that the imperial authority was not ſufficient to keep them within the bounds of their duty and allegiance; but eſpecially at this time, when luxury, the love of pleaſure, and a general diſſolution of manners, prevailed in all thoſe little courts.

CONFUCIUS, wiſely perſuaded, that the people could never be happy, ſo long as avarice, ambition, voluptuouſneſs, and falſe policy ſhould reign in this manner, reſolved to preach up a ſevere morality; and accordingly he began to enforce temperance, juſtice and other virtues, to inſpire a contempt of riches and outward pomp, to excite to magnanimity and a greatneſs of ſoul, which ſhould make

men incapable of diſſimulation and inſi
cerity; and uſed all the means he cou
think of, to redeem his countrymen fro
a life of pleaſure to a life of reaſon. H
was every where known, and as muc
beloved. His extenſive knowledge an
great wiſdom ſoon made him know
his integrity, and the ſplendor of his vi
tues made him beloved. Kings were go
verned by his counſels, and the peopl
reverenced him as a ſaint. He was o
fered ſeveral high offices in the magi
tracy, which he ſometimes accepted; bu
never from a motive of ambition, whic
he was not at all concerned to gratify
but always with a view of reforming
corrupt ſtate, and amending mankind
for he never failed to reſign thoſe offices
as ſoon as he perceived that he could b
no longer uſeful in them. Thus for
inſtance he was raiſed to a conſiderable

place of truſt in the kingdom of Lou, his own native country; where he had not exerciſed his charge above three months, when the court and provinces, through his counſels and management, were become quite another thing. He corrected many frauds and abuſes in the mercantile way, and reduced the weights and meaſures to their proper ſtandard. He inculcated fidelity and candour among the men, and exhorted the women to chaſtity and a ſimplicity of manners. By ſuch methods he wrought a general reformation, and eſtabliſhed every where ſuch concord and unanimity, that the whole kingdom ſeemed as if it were but one great family.

THE neighbouring princes began to be jealous. They eaſily perceived, that a king, under the councils of ſuch a man as CONFUCIUS, would quickly render

himſelf too powerful; ſince nothing can make a ſtate flouriſh more, than good order among the members, and an exact obſervance of its laws. Alarmed at this, the King of Tsi aſſembled his miniſters to conſider the methods, which might put a ſtop to the career of his new government; and after ſome deliberations, the following expedient was reſolved upon. They got together a great number of young girls of extraordinary beauty, who had been inſtructed from their infancy in ſinging and dancing, and were perfectly miſtreſſes of all thoſe charms and accompliſhments, which might pleaſe and captivate the heart. Theſe, under the pretext of an embaſſy, they preſented to the King of Lou, and to the grandees of his court. The preſent was joyfully received, and had its deſired effect. The arts of good

government were immediately neglected, and nothing was thought of, but inventing new pleasures for the entertainment of the fair strangers. In short, nothing was regarded for some months but feasting, dancing, shows, &c. and the court was intirely dissolved in luxury and pleasure. CONFUCIUS had foreseen all this, and endeavoured to prevent it by advising the refusal of the present; and he now laboured to take off the delusion they were fallen into, and to bring them back to reason and their duty. But all his endeavours proved ineffectual: there was nothing to be done: and the severity of the philosopher, whether he would or no, was obliged to give way to the overbearing fashion of the court. Upon which he immediately quitted his employment, exiling himself at the same time from

his native country; to try if he coul
find in other kingdoms minds and di
positions more fit to reliſh and purſu
his maxims.

He paſſed through the kingdoms o
Tsi, Guci and Tson, but met with in
ſurmountable difficulties every where
He had the misfortune to live in times
when rebellion, wars, and tumults rage
throughout the empire. Men had no
time to liſten to his philoſophy. They
had even leſs inclination to do it; for
as we have ſaid, they were ambitious
avaricious and voluptuous. Hence he
often met with ill treatment and re-
proachful language, and it is ſaid, that
conſpiracies were formed againſt his life:
to which may be added, that his neglect
of his own intereſts had reduced him
to the extremeſt poverty. Some phi-
loſophers among his contemporaries

were so affected with the terrible state of things, that they had rusticated themselves into the mountains and desarts, as the only places where happiness could be found; and would have persuaded CONFUCIUS to have followed them. But, 'I am a man, says CONFUCIUS, and 'cannot exclude myself from the society of men, and consort with beasts. 'Bad as the times are, I shall do all I 'can to recall men to virtue: for in virtue are all things, and if mankind 'would but once embrace it, and submit themselves to its discipline and laws, 'they would not want me or any body 'else to instruct them. It is the duty of a 'good man, first to perfect himself, and 'then to perfect others. Human nature, said he, came to us from heaven 'pure and perfect; but in process of 'time ignorance, the passions, and evil

his native country; to try if he could find in other kingdoms minds and diſpoſitions more fit to reliſh and purſue his maxims.

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'examples have corrupted it. All con-
'ſiſts in reſtoring it to its primitive beau-
'ty; and to be perfect, we muſt re-aſ-
'cend to that point, from which we
'have fallen. Obey heaven, and follow
'the orders of him who governs it.
'Love your neighbour as yourſelf. Let
'your reaſon, and not your ſenſes, be
'the rule of your conduct: for reaſon
'will teach you to think wiſely, to ſpeak
'prudently, and to behave yourſelf wor-
'thily upon all occaſions.'

CONFUCIUS in the mean time, though he had withdrawn himſelf from kings and palaces, did not ceaſe to travel about and do what good he could among the people, and among mankind in general. He had often in his mouth the maxims and examples of their antient heroes YAO, CHUN, YU, TSCHIN TANG, VEN FAN, ſo that they were thought to

all revived in the perſon of this great man. We ſhall not wonder therefore, that he proſelyted a great number of diſciples, who were inviolably attached to his perſon. He is ſaid to have had at leaſt three thouſand; ſeventy-two of whom were diſtinguiſhed above the reſt by their ſuperior attainments, and ten above them all by their comprehenſive view and perfect knowledge of his whole philoſophy and doctrines. He divided his diſciples into four claſſes, who applied themſelves to cultivate and propagate his philoſophy, each according to his particular diſtinction. The firſt claſs were to improve their minds by meditation, and to purify their hearts by virtue: and the moſt famous of this claſs were MEN TSEE AC KIEN, GEN PE MICOU, CHUNG KONG, YEN YUEN. The ſecond were to cultivate the arts

of reaſoning juſtly, and of compoſing elegant and perſuaſive diſcourſes: the moſt admired among theſe were TSAI NGO and TSOU KONG. The ſtudy of the third claſs was to learn the rules of good government, to give an idea of it to the mandarins, and to enable them to fill the public offices with honour: GEN YEU and KI LOU excelled herein. The laſt claſs were concerned in delivering the principles of morality in a conciſe and poliſhed ſtile to the people; and among theſe TSOU YEU and TSOU HIA deſerved the higheſt praiſe. Theſe ten choſen diſciples were, as it were, the flower of CONFUCIUS's ſchool.

HE ſent ſix hundred of his diſciples into different parts of the empire, to reform the manners of the people; and not ſatisfied with benefiting his own country only, he made frequent reſolu-

ions to paſs the ſeas, and propagate his doctrine to the fartheſt parts of the world. Hardly any thing can be added to the purity of his morality. He ſeems rather to ſpeak like a doctor of a revealed law, than like a man who had no light, but what the law of nature afforded him: and what convinces us of his ſincerity is, that he taught as forcibly by example as by precept. In ſhort, his gravity and ſobriety, his rigorous abſtinence, his contempt of riches and what are commonly called the goods of this life, his continual attention and watchfulneſs over his actions, and above all, that modeſty and humanity, which are not to be found among the Grecian ſages; all theſe, I ſay, would almoſt tempt one to believe, that he was not a mere philoſopher formed by reaſon only, but a man inſpired by God for the

reformation of the world, and to check that torrent of idolatry and superſtion, which was going to overſpread that particular part of it. CONFUCIUS is ſaid to have lived ſecretly three years, and to have ſpent the latter part of his life in ſorrow. A few days before his laſt illneſs, he told his diſciples with tears in his eyes, that he was overcome with grief at the ſight of the diſorders which prevailed in the empire: 'The moun-'tain, ſaid he, is fallen, the high ma-'chine is demoliſhed, and the ſages are 'all fled.' His meaning was, that the edifice of perfection, which he had endeavoured to raiſe, was entirely overthrown. He began to languiſh from that time, and the ſeventh day before his death, 'The kings,' ſaid he, 'reject 'my maxims; and ſince I am no longer 'uſeful on the earth, I may as well leave

it.' After theſe words he fell into a lethargy, and at the end of ſeven days expired in the arms of his diſciples, in the 73d year of his age. Upon the firſt hearing of his death, NGAI CONG, who then reigned in the kingdom of *Lou*, could not refrain from tears: 'The 'TIEN is not ſatisfied with me,' cried he, 'ſince it has taken away CONFUCI-'US.' In reality, wiſe men are precious gifts with which heaven bleſſes the earth; and their worth is never ſo well known, as when they are taken away. CONFUCIUS was lamented by the whole empire, which from that very moment began to honour him as a ſaint; and eſtabliſhed ſuch a veneration for his memory, as will probably laſt for ever in thoſe parts of the world. Kings have built palaces for him in all the provinces, whither the learned go at certain

times to pay him homage. There are to be ſeen upon ſeveral edifices raiſed in honour of him, inſcriptions in large characters, To the great maſter. To the head doctor. To the ſaint. To him who taught emperors, and kings. They built his ſepulchre near the city KIO FOU, on the banks of the river SUR, where he was wont to aſſemble his diſciples; and they have ſince incloſed it with walls, which look like a ſmall city to this very day.

AND although it be two thouſand years ſince this philoſopher's deceaſe, they have ſo great a veneration for his memory, that the magiſtrates never paſs by this place, without ſtopping their ſtately palankins, wherein they are carried for diſtinction ſake. They alight, and after ſome few moments proſtration, do march a little way on foot. There

are even emperors and kings who disdain not sometimes to visit these edifices where the titles of this philosopher are engraved, and to perform it after a glorious manner. Behold, the exceedingly remarkable words of the emperor YUMLO, who was the third emperor of the preceeding family called MIM: he pronounced them one day when he was disposed to go to CONFUCIUS's sepulchre. 'I adore the master of kings and 'emperors. Emperors and kings are 'lords and masters of their people; but 'CONFUCIUS has proposed the true methods of governing these very people, 'and of instructing the ages to come. It 'is therefore necessary, that I go to 'the place where he was buried, and 'there offer some presents to this great 'master, who is no more, to the end that 'I may shew how much I honour the

'learned, and how greatly I eſteem their 'doctrine.' Theſe extraordinary marks of veneration do intimate that the virtue and merit of this philoſopher have been extraordinary.

We muſt not conclude our account of this celebrated philoſopher, without mentioning one moſt remarkable particular relating to him, which is this; viz. that in ſpite of all the pains he had taken to eſtabliſh pure religion and ſound morality in the empire, he was nevertheleſs the innocent occaſion of their corruption. There goes a tradition in China, that when Confucius was complimented upon the excellency of his philoſophy, and his own conformity thereto, he modeſtly declined the honour that was done him, and ſaid, that 'he greatly fell ſhort of the moſt perfect degree 'of virtue, but that in the weſt the

'Moſt Holy was to be found.' Moſt of the miſſionaries who relate this are firmly perſuaded, that CONFUCIUS foreſaw the coming of the MESSIAH, and meant to predict it in this ſhort ſentence; but whether he did or no, it is certain, that it has always made a very ſtrong impreſſion upon the learned in CHINA: and the emperor MIMTI, who reigned ſixty-five years after the birth of CHRIST, was ſo touched with this ſaying of CONFUCIUS, together with a dream, in which he ſaw the image of a holy perſon coming from the weſt, that he fitted out a fleet for the eaſt, with orders to ſail till they had found him, and to bring back at leaſt his image and his writings. The perſons ſent upon this expedition, not daring to venture farther, went a-ſhore upon a little iſland, not far from the RED SEA, where

they found the ſtatue of FOHI, who had infected the INDIES with his doctrines five hundred years before the birth of CONFUCIUS. This they carried back to CHINA, together with the metempſychoſis, and the other reveries of this INDIAN philoſopher. The diſciples of CONFUCIUS at firſt oppoſed theſe newly imported doctrines with all the vigour imaginable; inveighing vehemently againſt MIMTI, who introduced them, and denouncing the judgment of heaven on ſuch emperors as ſhould ſupport them. But all their endeavours were vain; the torrent bore hard againſt them, and the pure religion and ſound morality of CONFUCIUS were ſoon corrupted, and in a manner overwhelmed by the prevailing idolatries and ſuperſtitions, which were introduced with the idol FOHI.

CONFUCIUS was endowed with admirable qualifications. He had an aſpect both grave and modeſt; he was faithful, juſt, chearful, civil, courteous, affable: and a ſerenity, which appeared in his countenance, gained him the hearts and reſpect of all thoſe that beheld him. He ſpake little, and meditated much. He eagerly purſued his ſtudy, without tiring his ſpirits. He contemned riches and honours when they were obſtacles to his deſigns. His whole delight was in teaching and making his doctrine ſavoury to many. He was ſeverer to himſelf than others. He had a continual circumſpection over himſelf, and was a rigid cenſurer of his own conduct. He blamed himſelf for not being aſſiduous enough in inſtructing; for not ſhewing vigilance enough in correcting his own faults, and for

not exerciſing himſelf, as he ought, in the practice of virtue. In fine, he had one virtue rarely found in great men, viz. humility: for he not only ſpake with an extreme modeſty of himſelf, and what concerned him, but he with a ſingular ſincerity declared to the whole world, that he ceaſed not to learn, and that the doctrine he taught was not his own, but the doctrine of the ancients. But his books are his true portraiture, which in this place we proceed to expoſe to view.

A

COLLECTION

OUT OF

Confucius's Works.

PART II. BOOK I.

THE firſt book of CONFUCIUS was publiſhed by one of his moſt famous diſciples, named CEMCU; and this learned diſciple writ very excellent commentaries thereon. This book is, as it were, the gate through which it is neceſſary to paſs to arrive at the ſublim-

eſt wiſdom, and moſt perfect virtue. The Philoſopher here treats of three conſiderable things.

1. Of what we ought to do to cultivate our mind, and regulate our manners.

2. Of the method by which it is neceſſary to inſtruct and guide others. And,

3. Of the care that every one ought to have to tend to the ſovereign good, to adhere thereto, and as I may ſo ſay, to repoſe himſelf therein.

Because the author chiefly deſigned to addreſs his inſtructions to the princes and magiſtrates that might be called to the regality, this book is intitled, Ta-Hio, or, The Great Science.

The great ſecret, ſays Confucius, to acquire true knowledge, the know-

ledge, conſequently, worthy of princes, and the moſt illuſtrious perſonages, is to cultivate and poliſh the reaſon, which is a preſent that we have received from heaven. Our concupiſcence has diſordered it, and intermixt ſeveral impurities therewith. Take away therefore, and remove from it theſe impurities, to the end that it may re-aſſume its former luſtre, and enjoy its utmoſt perfection. This here is the ſovereign good. This is not ſufficient. It is moreover requiſite, that a prince by his exhortations and by his own example make of his people, as it were, a new people. In fine, after being, by great pains, arrived at this ſovereign perfection, at this chief good, you muſt not relax; it is here that perſeverance is abſolutely neceſſary. Whereas men generally purſue not the methods that lead to the

poſſeſſion of the ſovereign good, and to a conſtant and eternal poſſeſſion, CONFUCIUS has thought it highly important to give ſome inſtructions therein.

HE ſays, that after we know the end to which we muſt attain, it is neceſſary to determine, and inceſſantly to make towards this end, by walking in the ways which lead thereunto; by daily confirming in his mind the reſolution fixed on for the attaining it, and by eſtabliſhing it ſo well, that nothing may in the leaſt ſhake it.

WHEN you ſhall have thus fixed your mind in this great deſign, give up yourſelf, adds he, to meditation: reaſon upon all things within yourſelf: endeavour to have ſome clear ideas thereof: conſider diſtinctly what preſenteth itſelf to you: paſs, without prejudice, ſolid judgments thereon: examine every

thing, and weigh every thing with care. After examinations and reaſonings of this nature, you may eaſily arrive at the end where you muſt fix, at the end where you ought reſolutely to ſtand, viz. at a perfect conformity of all your actions with what reaſon ſuggeſts.

As to the means which a prince ought to uſe to purify and poliſh his reaſon, to the end that it being thus diſpoſed, he may govern his ſtates, and redreſs and beautify the reaſon of his people, the philoſopher propoſes after what manner the ancient kings governed themſelves.

That they might at laſt govern their empire wiſely, they endeavoured, ſaith he, prudently to ſway a particular kingdom, and to excite its members to improve their reaſon, and to act like creatures endowed with underſtanding. To produce this reformation in this particu-

lar kingdom, they laboured to regulate their family, to the end that it might ſerve as a model to all the ſubjects of this kingdom. To reform their family, they took an extraordinary care to poliſh their own perſon, and ſo well to compoſe their words and actions, that they might neither ſay, nor do any thing that might ever ſo little offend complaiſance, and which was not edifying, to the end that they themſelves might be a pattern and example continually expoſed to the eyes of their domeſticks, and all their courtiers. To obtain this exterior perfection, they ſtrove to rectify their mind, by governing and ſubduing their paſſions; becauſe that the paſſions do, for the moſt part, remove the mind from its natural rectitude, do abaſe and incline to all ſorts of vice. To rectify their mind, to rule and ſubdue their paſſions, they ſo acted that their will

was always bent to good, and never turned towards evil. In fine, thus to diſpoſe their will, they ſtudied to illuminate their underſtanding, and ſo well to enlighten it, that, if it was poſſible, they might be ignorant of nothing: for to will, deſire, love and hate, it is neceſſary to know; this is the philoſophy of right reaſon.

THIS is what CONFUCIUS propoſed to the princes, to inſtruct them how to rectify and poliſh firſt their own reaſon, and afterwards the reaſon and perſon of all their ſubjects. But to make the greater impreſſion, after having gradually deſcended from the wiſe conduct of the whole empire, to the perfection of the underſtanding, he re-aſcends, by the ſame degrees, from the illuminated underſtanding to the happy ſtate of the whole empire. If, ſaith he, the underſtanding of a prince is well enlightened, his will

will incline only to good: his will inclining only to good, his ſoul will be entirely rectified, there will not be any paſſion that can make him deſtroy his rectitude: the ſoul being thus rectified, he will be compoſed in his exterior, nothing will be obſerved in his perſon that can offend complaiſance. His perſon being thus perfected, his family forming itſelf according to this model, will be reformed and amended. His family being arrived at this perfection, it will ſerve as an example to all the ſubjects of the particular kingdom, and the members of the particular kingdom, to all thoſe that compoſe the body of the empire. Thus the whole empire will be well governed; order and juſtice will reign there: we ſhall there enjoy a profound peace, it will be an happy and flouriſhing empire. CONFUCIUS afterwards certifies,

that theſe admonitions do not leſs regard the ſubjects than the princes; and after having addreſſed himſelf to kings, he tells them, that they ought particularly to apply themſelves rightly to govern their family, to take care thereof, and reform it: 'for, he adds, it is impoſſible 'that he that knows not how to govern 'and reform his own family, can rightly 'govern and reform a people.'

BEHOLD what is moſt important in CONFUCIUS's doctrine contained in the firſt book, and which is the text, as I may ſay, whereon his commentator CEMCU has taken pains.

THIS famous diſciple, to explain and enlarge his maſter's inſtructions, alledges authorities and examples which he draws from three very ancient books, highly eſteemed by the CHINESE.

THE firſt book he mentions, which is

of a later date than the reſt, is intitled CAMCAO, and makes up a part of the chronicles of the empire of CHEU. This book was compoſed by a prince called VUVAM, the ſon of king VENVAM. VUVAM does therein highly extol his father; but his principal deſign, in magnifying the virtues, and admirable qualities of this prince, is to form according to this model one of his brethren, whom he would perfect in virtue: and it is obſervable, that he ordinarily tells him that their father had the art of being virtuous. 'VENVAM,' ſaid he to him,' had the art 'of poliſhing his reaſon and his perſon.'

THE ſecond book from whence CEMCU cites his authorities and examples, is called TAR-KIA. This book, which is a great deal ancienter than the firſt, was written by a famous emperor of XAM, named Y-YIN; it is therein read, that

this Y-YIN, ſeeing TAR-KIA, the grandſon of the emperor CHIM-TAM, degenerate from the virtue of his illuſtrious anceſtors, and carry himſelf after a manner wholly different from theirs; he commanded him to live three years in a garden, where was his grandfather's tomb; that this made ſo great an impreſſion upon his ſpirit, that he changed his courſe: and that the ſame Y-YIN who had done him ſo kind an office, having afterwards advanced him to the empire, TAR-KIA governed it a long time in great proſperity. 'King TAM,' ſaid Y-YIN to TAR-'KIA, King TAM always had his mind diſ-'poſed to cultivate that precious reaſon 'which has been given us from heaven.'

IN fine, the third book, which is much ancienter than the two former, is called TI-TIEN; and upon the occaſion of king YAO it is there read, 'that this prince

'could cultivate this ſublime virtue, this 'great and ſublime gift, which he had re-'ceived from heaven, viz. natural reaſon.'

IT is evident, that CONFUCIUS's diſciple, by theſe authorities, deſigned to ſhew, or rather ſuppoſes that the whole world believes that we have all received from heaven, thoſe lights which moſt men ſuffer to extinguiſh by their negligence, a reaſon which moſt men voluntarily ſlight and ſuffer to corrupt: and ſeeing that there were princes which have perfected theſe lights, which have bettered and improved their reaſon, we ought to imitate them, and that we as well as they by their endeavours, may attain to ſuch a perfection.

WE muſt not here forget a remarkable thing which CEMCU relates, touching a baſon wherein King TAM uſed to bathe and waſh himſelf. He ſays,

that theſe excellent words were there engraved: 'Waſh thyſelf, renew thyſelf 'continually, renew thyſelf every day; 'renew thyſelf from day to day:' and that it was to intimate to the King, that if a prince who governs others has contracted vices and impurities, he ought to labour to cleanſe himſelf therefrom, and to reduce his heart into its firſt ſtate of purity. As for the reſt, is has been an ancient cuſtom amongſt the CHINESE to grave or paint on their domeſtic veſſels ſome moral ſentences, and ſtrong exhortations to virtue: ſo that when they bathed themſelves, or took their repaſts there, they had theſe ſentences and exhortations continually before their eyes. This ancient cuſtom is ſtill preſerved. There is only this difference, ſays he that publiſhes CONFUCIUS's works, that whereas hereto-

fore the characters were graved or painted on the inside of the veſſel, in the middle of the interior face, at preſent the CHINESE do moſt frequently grave or paint them on the outſide, 'ſatisfying 'themſelves in this age with the out-'ward appearance of virtue.'

AFTER CEMCU has ſpoken of the two firſt parts of his maſter's doctrine, the one of which reſpects what a prince ſhould do for his own perfection, and the other what he is obliged to do for the perfection and proſperity of others, he proceeds to the third and laſt part, wherein he diſcourſes of the laſt end that every one ought to propoſe as the ſovereign good, and whereat he ought to fix. We muſt remember that by the laſt end and ſovereign good, CONFUCIUS underſtands, as we have already obſerved, an entire conformity of our actions with right reaſon.

AFTER this, he alledges the example of that VENVAM, already ſpoken of: and certainly this prince's conduct was ſo wiſe and regular, that we cannot without admiration underſtand, how by the ſole lights of nature, he could have ſuch ideas as he had, and could arrive at ſo ſublime a virtue as that wherennto he attained. It will not be unpleaſing to ſee ſomething of it here.

VENVAM, ſaith the commentator, acknowledged, that the love which princes bear to their ſubjects, cannot but greatly contribute rightly to govern and make them happy: and upon this conſideration, he made this love his principal buſineſs, which he inceſſantly endeavoured to perfect. Behold the method he took! Becauſe that the principal virtue of a ſubject is to honour

and reſpect his king, VENVAM being as yet a ſubject, fixed himſelf to render this honour and reſpect; and took ſo great a pleaſure in theſe ſorts of obligations, that he always fulfilled them with great fidelity. As the firſt and moſt important virtue of children to their parents, is obedience, VENVAM, in the relation of a ſon, adhered to this obedience; and inceſſantly acquitted himſelf of this duty with an extraordinary piety. The principal virtue of a father, adds CONFUCIUS's diſciple, is a tender love for his children: thus VENVAM, like a father, ſtuck cloſe to this love, whereof he continually gave very ſignal proofs, not by a weak and criminal indulgence, but by the continual cares he took to reform and inſtruct them. In fine, fidelity is a virtue abſolutely neceſſary to thoſe that live in a ſociety: thus

VENVAM, in ſpeaking and acting with the ſubject of his kingdom, kept cloſe to this duty, and ſo ſtrongly adhered to it, that he never promiſed any thing which he effected not with an unſpeakable promptitude and exactneſs.

THIS prince, ſays CEMCU, was born of very virtuous parents, who had taken great care of his education, eſpecially his mother TAICIN, who had been a pattern of virtue; but he himſelf had ſo well improved this education, that he rendered himſelf an accompliſhed prince, and acquitted himſelf with ſo much reputation, and ſuch a general eſteem, even amongſt foreign nations, that forty-four kingdoms voluntarily ſubmitted to his empire. Nevertheleſs, adds he, this great honour wherewith he was environed, was never capable of eclipſing him: he was endowed with an inexpreſ-

ſible and unparalleled modeſty and humility: he very ſeverely accuſed himſelf of not being virtuous enough; for one day when he was ſick, the earth being ſhook with prodigious earthquakes, he ſought the cauſe of this calamity, and of the wrath of heaven, only in his own ſins, although he was of a conſummate virtue.

THAT which moſt appeared in VENVAM's actions, was an extraordinary charity; a proof whereof we will here alledge. In the annals of CHINA it is recorded, that this prince having found in the fields the bones of a man, to whom the honours of burying were refuſed, he immediately commanded them to be interred; and ſome of the by-ſtanders ſaying, that the maſter of the deceaſed was unknown, and that for this reaſon he might not concern himſelf, it being founded perhaps on ſome cuſtom of the

country; 'What,' replies the King, 'he 'that holds the reins of the empire, is 'not he the maſter of it? He that 'reigns, is not he the maſter of the 'kingdom? I am therefore the lord 'and maſter of the dead, wherefore 'then ſhould I refuſe him theſe laſt of-'fices of piety?' but this is not all; he had no ſooner uttered theſe words, but unſtripping himſelf of his royal veſtment, he commanded it to be uſed inſtead of a winding-ſheet, to wrap up theſe bones, and bury them according to the manners and cuſtoms of the country; which his courtiers obſerving with admiration, they thus cried out: 'If the 'piety of our prince is ſo great towards 'dry bones, how great will it not be 'towards men that enjoy life!' They made ſome other reflexions of this nature.

VENVAM's charity had properly for its object all ſorts of perſons, but particularly ancient perſons, widows, orphans, and the poor, whom he protected and nouriſhed as if they had been his own children. It is believed, that theſe charitable actions were the principal cauſe of the re-eſtabliſhment of a pious cuſtom of the firſt emperors, and of a law which is ſtill obſerved throughout CHINA. This law enacts, 'That in e-'very city, even in the leaſt, an hundred 'poor aged perſons ſhall be maintained 'at the public charge.'

BUT VENVAM, not ſatisfied with having given, in his life-time, inſtructions and examples of virtue; when he felt himſelf near death, not ſufficiently relying on the force of his preceding inſtructions and examples, and knowing that the laſt words of dying perſons do

make a great impreſſion, he likewiſe gave his ſon VUVAM theſe three admonitions.

1. 'When you ſee any virtuous actions done, be not ſlack to practiſe it.

2. 'When the opportunity of doing a reaſonable thing ſhall offer, make uſe of it without heſitating.

3. 'Ceaſe not thy endeavours to extirpate and ſuppreſs vice. Theſe three admonitions which I give you, my ſon,' adds he, 'do comprehend whatever may produce an exact probity, and excellent conduct.'

BEHOLD doubtleſs an example which ſhews, that in this king's life-time, the CHINESE had very rational ſentiments, and that virtue, as I may ſay, was their paſſion: for in a word, the people generally conform themſelves to the ſentiments and manners of their kings.

Regis ad exemplum, totus componitur orbis.

THERE is nothing that gives a greater idea of the virtue of the ancient CHINESE, than what they have writ and practiſed, in reſpect of their law ſuits. They teach, that actions ought not to be commenced againſt one; that frauds, ſeverities, and enmities, which are the general attendants and conſequences of law ſuits, were unbecoming men; that the whole world ought to live in unity and concord, and that to this end it behoved every one to uſe their utmoſt endeavours, either to prevent law ſuits from ariſing, or to ſtifle them in their birth, by reconciling the parties, or inſpiring them with the love of peace; that is to ſay, 'by engaging them to re-' new and improve their reaſons:' theſe are CEMCU's own words.

BUT that which is moſt remarkable on this ſubject, is, the extraordinary precautions which the judges took before any cauſe was brought before their tribunals. They, with the utmoſt vigilance and attention, examined the outſide of the plaintiff, or him that began the ſuit; to the end, that by this means they might know whether this man was thereunto excited by good motives; whether he believed his cauſe good, or whether he acted ſincerely: and for this purpoſe there were five rules. By the firſt rule, they examined the placing of his words, and manner of ſpeaking; and this was called CUTIM, that is to ſay, the obſervation of the words. By the ſecond, they conſidered the air of his countenance and the motion of his lips, and this was called SETIM, that is to ſay, the obſervation of the face. By

the third, they obſerved his manner of breathing, when he propoſed his cauſe; this rule was called KITIM, that it to ſay, the obſervation of the reſpiration. By the fourth, they remarked whether his reply was quick; whether he gave not intricate, ill-grounded, uncertain anſwers, or whether he ſpake of any other thing than that in queſtion; or whether his words were not ambiguous; and this was called ULHTIM, that is to ſay, the obſervation of the anſwers. Laſtly, by the fifth, the judges were carefully to weigh the conſiderations and reſpect, to ſee whether there was no trouble, digreſſion, or confuſion; if there appeared not any ſign of a lye and fraud; and this laſt rule was called MOTIM, that is to ſay, the obſervation of the eyes.

IT was by theſe exterior marks that

this ancient AREOPAGITE diſcovered the moſt hidden thoughts of the heart, rendered an exact juſtice, diverted a great many perſons from law-ſuits and frauds, and inſpired in them the love of equity and concord. But at preſent theſe rules are unknown in CHINA, or at leaſt wholly neglected.

To return to CONFUCIUS's doctrine illuſtrated with the commentaries of CEMCU. This diſciple ſet a high value upon a maxim which he had frequently heard his maſter repeat, and which himſelf alſo very ſtrongly inculcated. It was this; 'always behave thy-'ſelf with the ſame precaution and diſ-'cretion as you would do, if you were 'obſerved by ten eyes, and pointed at 'by as many hands.'

To render virtue yet more commendable, and more eaſily to inſpire the ſen-

timents thereof, the ſame diſciple demonſtrates, that, whatever is honeſt and advantageous, being amiable, we are obliged to love virtue, becauſe it includes both theſe qualities; that moreover virtue is an ornament which embelliſhes, as I may ſay, the whole perſon of him that poſſeſſes it, his interiour and exteriour; that to the mind it communicates inexpreſſible beauties and perfections; that as to the body, it there produces very ſenſible delights; that it affords a certain phyſiognomy, certain tranſports, certain ways which infinitely pleaſe; and as it is the property of virtue to becalm the heart and keep peace there, ſo this inward tranquillity and ſecret joy do produce a certain ſerenity in the countenance, a certain joy and air of goodneſs, kindneſs and reaſon, which attracts the heart and eſteem of the whole

world. After which he concludes, that the principal buſineſs of a man is to rectify his mind, and ſo well to rule his heart, that his paſſions might always be calm; and if it happen that they be excited, he ought to be moved no farther than is neceſſary; in a word, that he may regulate them according to right reaſon. For, as for inſtance, adds he, if we ſuffer ourſelves to be tranſported with exceſſive anger, that is to ſay, if we fall into a rage without any cauſe, or more than we ought when we have reaſon, we may thence conclude, that our mind has not the rectitude it ought to have. If we contemn and mortally hate a perſon, by reaſon of certain defects that we obſerve in him, and render not juſtice to his good and excellent qualities, if endowed therewith; if we permit ourſelves to be troubled by a

too great fear; if we abandon ourſelves to an immoderate joy, or to an exceſſive ſorrow, it cannot be ſaid that our mind is in the ſtate wherein it ought to be, that it has its rectitude and uprightneſs.

CEMCU carries this moral a great way further, and gives it a perfection which, in my opinion, could never be expected from thoſe that have not been honoured with divine revelation. He ſays, that it is not only neceſſary to obſerve moderation in general, as oft as our paſſions are ſtirred, but that alſo in reſpect of thoſe which are the moſt lawful, innocent and laudable, we ought not blindly to yield up ourſelves thereunto, and always to follow their motions; it is neceſſary to conſult reaſon. As for example, parents are obliged to love one another. Nevertheleſs, as their

amity may be too weak, ſo it may be alſo too ſtrong; and as to the one and the other reſpect, there is doubtleſs an irregularity. It is juſt for a child to love his father; but if a father has any conſiderable defect, if he has committed any great fault, it is the duty of a ſon to acquaint him with it, and tell him what may be for his good, always keeping a due reſpect, from which he ought not to depart. Likewiſe, if a ſon is fallen into any ſin, it is the duty of a father to remove him, and give his advice thereon. But if their love is blind; if their love is a mere paſſion; if it is fleſh and blood which make them to act, this affection is an irregular affection. Why? becauſe it digreſſeth from the rule of right reaſon.

We ſhould injure the reader if we ſhould omit ſpeaking of the emperor

YAO, whoſe elogy is recorded in the work that affords the matter of ours. Never man has more exactly practiſed all theſe duties, which has been propoſed by CONFUCIUS's diſciple, than he. It may be ſaid, if his portraiture is not flattered, that he had a diſpoſition made for virtue. He had a tender, but magnanimous and well-diſpoſed heart. He loved thoſe that he was obliged to love, but it was without the leaſt weakneſs. He, in a word, regulated his love and all his paſſions, according to right reaſon.

THIS prince arrived at the empire 2357 years before JESUS CHRIST, he reigned an hundred years: but he ruled with ſo much prudence, wiſdom, and ſo many demonſtrations of clemency and kindneſs to his ſubjects, that they were the happieſt people of the earth.

YAO had all the excellent qualities deſireable in a prince; his riches made him not proud; his extraction, which was ſo noble and illuſtrious, puffed him not up with arrogancy. He was virtuous, ſincere, and kind without affectation. His palace, table, apparel and furniture diſcovered the greateſt moderation that ever was ſeen. He delighted in muſick, but it was a grave, modeſt, and pious muſick: he deteſted nothing ſo much as ſongs wherein modeſty and civility were blemiſhed. It was not a capricious humour that made him diſlike theſe ſorts of ſongs, it was the deſire he had of rendering himſelf in all things pleaſing unto heaven. It was not avarice that produced in him that moderation which he obſerved in his table, apparel, furniture, and every thing elſe; it was only the love he bare to thoſe that were

in want, for he only deſigned to relieve them. It was alſo his great piety, and that ardent charity wherewith he burned, which made him frequently to utter theſe admirable words: 'The famine 'of my people is my own famine. My 'people's ſin is my own ſin.'

In the ſeventy-ſecond year of his reign he elected Xun as a collegue, who governed the empire twenty-eight years with him: but what is moſt remarkable, and which deſerves the praiſe and applauſe of all ages, is, that although he had a ſon, he declared, that he appointed Xun, in whom he had ſeen a great deal of virtue, an exact probity, and judicious conduct, for his ſucceſſor. And it being told him, that his ſon complained of his excluding him from the ſucceſſion to the empire, he made this anſwer, which alone may be the ſubject

of an excellent panegyrick, and render his memory immortal: 'I had rather 'my only ſon ſhould be wicked, and all 'my people good, than if my ſon alone 'was good, and all my people wick-'ed.'

CONFUCIUS's chief aim, as we have declared, being to propoſe his doctrine to kings, and perſuade them to it, becauſe he thought, that if he could inſpire them with the ſentiments of virtue, their ſubjects would become virtuous after their example; CEMCU explaining this doctrine expatiates largely on the duty of kings.

HE principally applies himſelf to three things.

1. To ſhew that it is very important that kings behave themſelves well in their court and family, becauſe that

their ways and actions are certainly imitated.

2. To perſuade them of the neceſſity there is in general of acquiring the habit of virtue, and of performing the duties thereof in all places and upon all accounts.

To engage them not to impoveriſh the people, but to do all for their good and eaſe.

As to the firſt article, he makes uſe of ſeveral cogitations, which the book of odes affords him. But behold, in two words, the moſt conſiderable part of his diſcourſe. If, ſaith he, a king as a father, teſtifies love to his children; if as a ſon, he is obedient to his father; if in quality of the eldeſt ſon, he is courteous to his younger brethren, and lives peaceably with them: If, as the youngeſt, he has a reſpect and eſteem for the

eldeſt; if he kindly uſes thoſe that are in his ſervice; if he is charitable, eſpecially to widows and orphans: if, I ſay, a king exactly acquits himſelf of all this, his people will imitate him, and every one will be ſeen to practiſe virtue throughout his kingdom. Parents will tenderly love their children, and give them a good education. Children will honour their parents, and render them due obedience. The elder will ſhew kindneſs to their younger brother, and the younger will have a reſpect and eſteem for the elder, or for other perſons for whom good manners require that they ſhould have reſpect; as, for example, for perſons advanced in age. In fine, thoſe that have eſtates will maintain ſome widows, orphans, and ſome ſick perſons: for there is nothing that makes a greater impreſſion on the

minds of people, than the examples of their kings.

As to the ſecond article, where CEMCU exhorts in general to the practiſe of virtue, he alledges for a principal this maxim, to which CHRIST himſelf ſeems to refer all his morality, 'Do to another 'what you would they ſhould do unto 'you; and do not unto another what 'you would not ſhould be done unto 'you.'

AMONGST thoſe in the midſt of whom you live, ſays CONFUCIUS's diſciple, there are ſome above you, others inferiour to you, and others that are your equals: there are ſome that preceded you, others that are to be your ſucceſſors; you have them on your right hand and on your left. Conſider, that all theſe men have the ſame paſſions with you, and that what you deſire they

ſhould do, or not do, unto you, they deſire that you ſhould do, or not do, unto them. What you therefore hate in your ſuperiours, what you blame in them, be ſure not to practiſe towards your inferiours: and what you hate and blame in your inferiours, practiſe not to your ſuperiours. What diſpleaſes you in your predeceſſors, eſchew, to give an example to thoſe that ſhall come after. And as in caſe that you ſhould happen to give them ſuch an example, you would deſire they ſhould not follow it; ſo you ſhould not follow the bad examples of thoſe that have preceded you. In fine, what you blame in thoſe which are on your right hand, practiſe not to thoſe which are on your left; and what you reprehend in thoſe on your left hand, be ſure not to practiſe it to thoſe that are on your right.

Behold, concludes CEMCU, after what manner we ought to meaſure and regulate all our actions! And if a prince thus exerciſes himſelf, it will happen that all his ſubjects will be of one heart and one mind, and that he will rather be called their father than their lord and maſter. This will be the means to draw down the bleſſings and favours of heaven, not to fear any thing, and to lead a quiet and peaceable life: for, in fine, virtue is the baſis and foundation of an empire, and the ſource from whence flows whatever may render it flouriſhing. It was upon this conſideration that an ambaſſador of the kingdom of ÇU returned this excellent anſwer to a nobleman of the kingdom of CIN, who aſked him, whether in his maſter's kingdom there were great riches and precious ſtones; 'Nothing is

'eſteemed precious in the kingdom of 'Cu but virtue.' A King of Ci returned almoſt the ſame anſwer. This prince treating of an alliance with the King of Guei, and the King of Guei demanding of him, if in his kingdom there were precious ſtones; he anſwered, 'That there were none.' 'How!' replied this king all in amaze, 'Is it 'poſſible that though my kingdom be 'leſſer than yours, yet there is found a 'carbuncle whoſe brightneſs is ſo great, 'that it can enlighten ſpace enough for 'twelves palanquins; and that in your 'kingdom, which is vaſter than mine, 'there are none of theſe precious ſtones! 'I have four miniſters,' rejoins the King of Ci, 'who with great prudence 'govern the provinces I have commit-'ted to them; behold my precious

'ſtones, they can enlighten a thouſand 'ſtadia.'

THESE are not the men alone in CHINA that have eſteemed virtue; there were women that have conſidered it as a jewel of infinite value, and preferable to all treaſures. An illuſtrious queen named KIAM, who reigned two hundred years before CONFUCIUS, reclaimed her husband from ſenſuality and debauchery, by an action which deſerves to be immortalized. She ſeeing that this prince continually reſorted to the paſtimes of debauchery, and abandoned himſelf to all ſorts of pleaſures, ſhe one day plucked her pendants from her ears, and laid aſide all her jewels, and in this condition went to the King, and ſpake to him theſe words with a ſenſible emotion. 'Sir, is it poſſible that 'luxury and debauchery are ſo very

'pleaſing to you? You contemn vir-
'tue; but I eſteem it infinitely more
'than the moſt precious ſtones.' She afterwards enlarged upon this ſubject, and the actions and diſcourſe of this princeſs touched him ſo ſtrongly, that he renounced his extravagancies, and gave himſelf up entirely to virtue, and the care of his kingdom, which he governed thirteen years with great applauſe.

In fine, as to the laſt article, Cemcu repreſents to kings, that they ought not to oppreſs their people, either by impoſitions or otherwiſe; that to avoid being forced thereto, it is neceſſary to chuſe wiſe, faithful and virtuous miniſters, and conſequently not to admit into the management of affairs, thoſe that are unworthy, and who by their cruelties, ambition and avarice, can only

bring a vaſt prejudice to the ſtate. He ſhews them, that they ought to leſſen, as much as is poſſible, the number of their miniſters, and of all thoſe that live at the public expence; to endeavour to excite all to work, and ſo to order it, that thoſe who manage and diſburſe the treaſure, may do it with all the moderation imaginable. Princes, adds he, ought never to ſeek private intereſt; they ought only to look after the intereſts of their people: to be beloved and faithfully ſerved, they ought to convince their ſubjects, by their conduct, that they deſign only to make them happy; which they will never do, if they heartily follow their particular intereſts, if they oppreſs and impoveriſh them.

A

COLLECTION

OUT OF

Confucius's Works.

BOOK SECOND.

THIS ſecond book of CONFUCIUS was publiſhed by his grand-ſon CUSU. It treats of divers things, but eſpecially of that excellent mediocrity, which muſt be conſtantly obſerved in all things, between the too much and too little. Thus this book is entitled CHU-

MYUM, that is to ſay, the perpetual mean, a mean conſtantly obſerved.

CONFUCIUS teaches at firſt, that all men ought to love this mediocrity, which they ought to ſearch after with an extream care. He ſays, that the perfect man always keeps a juſt mean, whatever he undertakes; but that the wicked always ſwerves therefrom, that he does too much, or not enough. When the right reaſon ſent from heaven, adds he, has once ſhewed a wiſe man the mean he ought to keep, he afterwards conforms all his actions thereunto, at all times, as well in adverſity as proſperity; he continually watches over himſelf, over his thoughts, over the moſt ſecret motions of his heart, always to ſquare himſelf according to this juſt mean, which he will never loſe ſight of; but the wicked being not reſtrain-

ed, neither by fear, modeſty, nor the love of virtue, their extravagant paſſions do always carry them into extreams.

THIS philoſopher cannot ſufficiently admire this happy mediocrity, he looks on as the ſublimeſt thing in the world, as a thing moſt worthy of the love and employment of the higheſt minds, as the ſole path of virtue. He complains, that there always have been ſo few perſons that have kept it; he diligently enquires after the cauſe thereof. He ſays, that as for the wiſe men of the age, they ſlight and condemn it, becauſe they imagine it below their great deſigns, below their ambitious projects; and that as for dull perſons they very hardly attain it, either by reaſon they underſtand it not, or becauſe the difficulty in attaining it aſtoniſhes

and dicourages them: and all this, adds CONFUCIUS, happens for want of examination, for if we diligently examined what is good in itſelf, we ſhould find that all extreams are prejudicial, and that the mean alone is always good and gainful.

HE herein particularly alledges the example of XUN the emperor; he cries out, how great was the prudence of the emperor XUN? He was not ſatisfied in the adminiſtration of ſtaate-affairs, with his ſingle examination, with his own particular judgment and prudence; he likewiſe conſulted the meaneſt of his ſubjects. He aſked advice upon the leaſt things; and he made it a duty and delight to weigh the anſwers that were given him, how common ſo ever they appeared. When any thing was propoſed to him, which, after a ſtrict examination,

he was convinced was repugnant to right reaſon, he acquieſced not, but with an open heart repreſented what was amiſs in the counſel that was given him. By this means he made his ſubjects to place a confidence in him, and accuſtom themſelves freely to give him advertiſments, from time to time. As for the good and judicious counſels, he followed, magnified, and extolled them; and thereby every one was encouraged, joyfully to declare his opinion. But if, amongſt the counſels that were given him, he found that ſome plainly contradicted others, he attentively conſidered them, and after having examined them, he always took a mean, eſpecially when it concerned the publick intereſts.

CONFUCIUS here deplores the falſe prudence of the men of his time. It had, indeed, very much degenerated

from the prudence of the antient kings. There is not, ſaith he, any perſon at preſent, who declares not, I have prudence, I know what is neceſſary to be done, and what is not. But becauſe that now profit and particular advantage are the only objects delighted in, it happens that we think not on the evils which may thence enſue, on the perils to which this gain and profit expoſe us; and that the precipice is not perceived by us. There are ſome that perfectly underſtand the nature and value of mediocrity, who chuſe it for their rule, and ſquare their actions thereby, but who afterwards ſuffering themſelves to be overcome by ſloth, have not the power to perſiſt. To what end, in theſe ſorts of perſons, does the knowledge and reſolutions they have formed tend to? Alas! it was not thus with my diſciple HORI; he had an

exquiſite diſcerning faculty; he remarked all the differences that occurred in things; he always choſe a mean, and never forſook it.

As for the reſt, adds CONFUCIUS, it is not a very eaſy thing to acquire that medium which I ſo much commend. Alas! there is nothing ſo difficult; it is an affair which requires great pains and induſtry. You will find men capable of governing happily the kingdoms of the earth. You will ſee ſome that will have magnanimity enough to refuſe the moſt conſiderable dignities and advantages: there will be ſome alſo that will have courage enough to walk on naked ſwords; but you will find few, that are capable of keeping a juſt mean; that to arrive hereat, art, labour, courage and virtue are required.

IT was upon the account of this mo-

ral, thatone of his diſciples, who was of a warlike and ambitious temper, aſked him, wherein valour conſiſted, and what it was neceſſary to do to obtain the name of valiant? Have you heard, ſays CONFUCIUS, of the valour of thoſe in the ſouth, or thoſe that dwell in the north, or rather of the valour of my diſciples, who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of wiſdom? To act mildly in the education of children and diſciples, to be indulgent to them; patiently to bear their diſobediences and defects, is that wherein the valour of the ſouthern people conſiſts. By this valour they conquer their violent temper, and ſubmit their paſſions, which are generally violent, to right reaſon. To lie down courageouſly in a camp, to repoſe quietly, in the midſt of a terrible army; to ſee a thouſand deaths before his eyes, without daunt-

ing; not to be disquieted, but make a pleasure of this sort of life: behold what I call the valour of the northern men! But as generally there is a great deal of rashness in all this, and that oftentimes men regulate not themselves according to that mean which every one ought to seek after, it is not this sort of valour which I require of my disciples. Behold what his character ought to be!

A PERFECT man (for in short, the perfect men only can have a true valour) ought always to be busied in conquering himself. He must suit himself to the manners and tempers of others; but he ought always to be master of his own heart and actions; he must not suffer himself to be corrupted by the conversation or examples of loose and effeminate persons; he must never obey, till he has first examined what is com-

manded him; he must never imitate others, without judgment. In the midst of so many mad and blind persons, which go at random, he must walk aright, and not incline to any party: this is the true valour. Moreover, if this very person is called to the magistracy, in a kingdom where virtue is considered, and he changes not his morals, how great soever the honours be, to which he is advanced; if he there preserves all the good habits, which he had when only a private man; if he permit not himself to be lead away with pride and vanity, this man is truly valiant: Ah! how great is this valour! But if, on the contrary, he is in a kingdom, where virtue and laws are contemned, and that in the confusion and disorder which there prevail, he himself is depressed with poverty, afflicted, reduced even to

the loſs of life; but yet, in the midſt of ſo many miſeries, he remains conſtant, preſerves all the innocency of his manners, and never changes his opinion: Ah! how great and illuſtrious is this valour! Inſtead therefore of the valour of the ſouthern or northern countries, I require, and expect from you, my dear diſciples, a valour of the nature above-mentioned.

BEHOLD ſomething which CONFUCIUS ſpeaks, which is not leſs remarkable. There are ſome men, ſaith he, which ſurpaſs the bounds of mediocrity, by affecting to have extraordinary virtues: they covet always to have ſomething marvellous in their actions, to the end that poſterity may praiſe and extol them. Certainly, as for myſelf, I ſhall never be enamoured with theſe glittering actions, where vanity and ſelf-love have

ever a greater ſhare than virtue. I would only know and practiſe what it is neceſſary to know and practiſe every where.

THERE are four rules, according to which the perfect man ought to ſquare himſelf.

1. HE himſelf ought to practiſe in reſpect of his father, what he requires from his ſon.

2. IN the ſervice of his prince he is obliged to ſhew the ſame fidelity which he demands of thoſe that are under him.

3. HE muſt act in reſpect of his eldeſt brother, after the ſame manner that he would that his younger brother ſhould act towards him.

4. AND laſtly, he ought to behave himſelf towards his friends, as he deſires that his friends ſhould carry them-

ſelves to him. The perfect man continually acquits himſelf of theſe duties, how common ſoever they may appear. If he happen to perceive that he has done amiſs in any thing, he is not at reſt till he has repaired his fault: if he finds that he has omitted any conſiderable duty, there is not any violence which he does not to himſelf perfectly to accompliſh it. He is moderate and reſerved in his diſcourſes; he ſpeaks with circumſpection: if to him occurs a great affluence of words, he preſumes not to expoſe it, he reſtrains himſelf. In a word, he is ſo rigorous a cenſurer of himſelf, that he is not at reſt when his words correſpond not to his actions, and his actions to his words. Now the way, cries he, by which a man arrives at this perfection, is a ſolid and conſtant virtue.

To this his master's doctrine, Cusu here adds a moral worthy of their meditation, who have a desire to perfect themselves. The perfect man, says this worthy disciple of so great a philosopher, the perfect man governs himself according to his present state, and covets nothing beyond it. If he find himself in the midst of riches, he acts like a rich man, but addicts not himself to unlawful pleasures; he avoids luxury, detests pride, offends no body. If he is in a poor and contemptible state, he acts as a poor and mean man ought to act; but he does nothing unworthy of a grave and worthy man: if he be remote from his own country, he behaves himself as a stranger ought to do; but he is always like himself. If he is in affliction and adversity, he does not insolently affront his destiny, but has courage and resolu-

tion; nothing can ſhake his conſtancy. If he is advanced to the dignities of ſtate, he keeps his rank, but never treats his inferiours with ſeverity; and if he ſees himſelf below others, he is humble, he never departs from the reſpect he owes to his ſuperiours; but he never purchaſes their favour with flattery. He uſes his utmoſt endeavours to perfect himſelf, and exacts nothing of others with ſeverity: it is upon this account that he expreſſes no diſcontent or anger to any perſon. If he lifts up his eyes towards heaven, it is not to complain, for that it has not ſent him proſperity, or to murmur, for that it afflicts him: if he looks down towards the ground, it is not to reproach men, and attribute the cauſe of his miſeries and neceſſities unto them; it is to teſtify his humility, that is to ſay, that he

is always contented with his condition, that he desires nothing beyond, and that with submission and an even spirit, he expects whatever heaven shall ordain concerning him. Thus he rejoiceth in a certain tranquillity, which may well be compared to the top of those mountains, which are higher than the region where the thunder and tempests are formed.

In the sequel of this book, he discourses of the profound respect which the ancient Chinese, and especially the kings and emperors, had for their parents, and of the exact obedience which they paid them. If a king, said they, honours and obeys his father and mother, certainly he will endeavour to excite his subjects to follow his example; for briefly, a man that loves virtue, desires that all others should likewise e-

ſteem it, eſpecially if it is his intereſt that they ſhould be virtuous: now it is of great importance to a king, that his ſubjects do love virtue and practiſe it. Indeed, how can he hope to be obeyed by his ſubjects, if he himſelf refuſes to obey thoſe that gave him life. After all, if a prince deſires to bring his ſubjects to be obedient to their parents, he muſt ſhew kindneſs towards them, and treat them with that tenderneſs which fathers have for their children; for we willingly imitate thoſe whom we love, and of whom we think we are beloved. But if this prince by his conduct excites his ſujects to give obedience to their parents, and afterwards obey him as their common father, moſt certainly they will obey heaven, from whence crowns and empires do come: heaven, which is the ſovereign father

of all. And what will be the effect of this obedience? It will happen that heaven will diffuſe its bleſſings on thoſe that ſhall thus well acquit themſelves. It will abundantly recompence ſo admirable a virtue, it will make peace and concord every where to reign; ſo that the king and his ſubjects will ſeem as one ſingle family, where the ſubjects obeying their king, as their father, and the king loving his ſubjects as his children, they will all lead, as in a ſingle, but rich, magnificent, regular, and convenient houſe, the happieſt and moſt peaceable life imaginable.

To return to CONFUCIUS: as he knew that the examples of kings made a great impreſſion on men's minds, ſo he propoſes that of the emperor XUN, in reſpect of the obedience which children owe to their parents. 'Oh, how great

'has the obedience of this emperor 'been!' cries CONFUCIUS. Thus, continues he, if he has obtained from heaven the imperial crown, it is the recompence of this virtue. It is this virtue that procured him ſo many revenues, thoſe immenſe riches and vaſt kingdoms, which are only limited by the ocean. It is this virtue that has rendered his name ſo famous throughout the world. In fine, I doubt not but that long and peaceable life, which he enjoyed, ought to be conſidered as a recompence of this virtue. To hear this philoſopher ſpeak, would it not be ſaid, that he had read the decalogue, and underſtood the promiſe which God has there made to thoſe that honour their father and mother? But if, by what CONFUCIUS declares, it ſeem, that the decalogue was not unknown to him, it will rather ſeem

that he knew the maxims of the goſpel, when we ſhall ſee what he teaches concerning charity, which he ſays it is neceſſary to have for all men.

THAT love, ſaith he, which it is requiſite for all men to have, is not a ſtranger to man, it is man himſelf; or, if you will, it is a natural property of man, which dictates unto him, that he ought generally to love all men. Nevertheleſs, above all men to love his father and mother, is his main and principal duty, from the practice of which he afterwards proceeds, as by degrees, to the practice of that univerſal love, whoſe object is all mankind. It is from this univerſal love that diſtributive juſtice comes, that juſtice, which makes us to render to every one his due, and more eſpecially to cheriſh and honour wiſe and upright men, and to advance them

to the dignities and offices of ſtate. That difference, which is between the love we have for our parents, and that we have for others, between the love we bear to virtuous and learned men, and that we bear to thoſe which have not ſo much virtue or ability; that difference, I ſay, is as it were a harmony, a ſymmetry of duties, which the reaſon of heaven has protected, and in which nothing muſt be changed.

For the conduct of life Confucius propoſes five rules, which he calls univerſal.

The firſt regards the juſtice that ought to be practiſed between a king and his ſubjects.

The ſecond reſpects the love that ought to be between a father and his children.

THE third recommends conjugal fidelity to husbands and wives.

THE fourth concerns the ſubordination that ought to appear between elder and younger brothers.

THE fifth obliges friends to live in concord, in great and mutual kindneſs.

BEHOLD, adds he, the five general rules, which every one ought to obſerve; behold, as it were, the five public roads, by which men ought to paſs. But after all we cannot obſerve theſe rules, if theſe three virtues are wanting; prudence, which makes us diſcern good from evil, univerſal love, which makes us love all men, and that reſolution, which makes us conſtantly to perſevere in the adheſion to good, and averſion to evil. But for fear leaſt ſome fearful perſons not well verſed in mo-

rality ſhould imagine, that it is impoſſible for them to acquire theſe three virtues, he affirms, that there is no perſon incapable of acquiring them; that the impotence of the man is voluntary. How dull ſoever a man is, ſhould he, ſays he, be without any experience, yet if he deſires to learn, and grows not weary in the ſtudy of virtue, he is not very far from prudence. If a man, although full of ſelf-love, endeavours to perform good actions, behold him already very near that univerſal love, which engages him to do good to all. In fine, if a man feels a ſecret ſhame, when he hears impure and unchaſte diſcourſes; if he cannot forbear bluſhing thereat, he is not far from that reſolution of ſpirit, which makes him conſtantly to ſeek after good, and to have an averſion for evil.

AFTER that the CHINESE philoſopher has treated of theſe five univerſal rules, he propoſes nine particular ones for kings, becauſe that he conſiders their conduct as a public ſource of happineſs or miſery. They are theſe.

1. A KING ought inceſſantly to labour to adorn his perſon with all ſorts of virtues.

2. HE ought to honour and cheriſh the wiſe and virtuous.

3. HE ought to reſpect and love thoſe that gave him birth.

4. HE ought to honour and eſteem thoſe miniſters that diſtinguiſh themſelves by their abilities, and thoſe which exerciſe the principal offices of the magiſtracy.

5. HE ought to accommodate himſelf, as much as it is poſſible, to the ſentiments and minds of other miniſters,

and as for thoſe that have leſs conſiderable employments, he ought to conſider them as his members.

6. HE ought to love his people, even the meaneſt, as his own children, and to ſhare in the various ſubjects of joy or ſorrow, which they may have.

7. HE ought to uſe his utmoſt to bring into his kingdom ſeveral able artificers in all ſorts of arts, for the advantage and conveniency of his ſubjects.

8. HE ought kindly and courteouſly to receieve ſtrangers and travellers, and fully to protect them.

9. LASTLY, he ought tenderly to love the princes, and great men of his empire, and ſo heartily to ſtudy their intereſts that they may love him, and be ever faithful to him.

RIGHTLY to underſtand the morals of CONFUCIUS, it is here neceſſary to

ſpeak one word concerning the diſtinction which he makes between the ſaint and wiſe. To the one and the other he attributes certain things in common: but to the ſaint he gives ſome qualities and advantages, which he ſays, that the wiſe has not. He ſays, that reaſon and innocence have been equally communicated to the wiſe, and to the ſaint, and likewiſe to all other men; but that the ſaint has never in the leaſt declined from right reaſon, and has conſtantly preſerved his integrity; whereas the wiſe has not always preſerved it, having not always followed the light of reaſon, becauſe of ſeveral obſtacles he has met with in the practice of virtue, and eſpecially, by reaſon of his paſſions, whereunto he is a ſlave. So that it is neceſſary, that he does his utmoſt, that he uſes great pains and endeavours, to put

his heart in a good poſture, and to govern himſelf according to the lights of right reaſon and the rules of virtue.

Cusu reaſoning hereon, the better to illuſtrate his maſter's doctrine, compares thoſe that have loſt their firſt integrity, and deſires to regain it, to thoſe withered and almoſt dead trees, that notwithſtanding have in the trunk and roots a certain juice, a certain principle of life, which makes them caſt forth ſhoots. If, ſaith he, we take care of theſe trees, if we cultivate them, water them, and prune off the dead branches, it will happen that this tree will re-aſſume its former ſtate. After the ſame manner, although one has loſt his firſt integrity and innocence, he need only excite the good that remains, uſe pains and induſtry, and he will infallibly arrive at the higheſt virtue. This laſt ſtate,

ſaith CUSU, this ſtate of the wiſe is called GIANTAO, that is to ſay, the road and the reaſon of man, or rather, the way which leads to the origin of the firſt perfection. And the ſtate of the ſaint is called TIENTAO, that is to ſay, the reaſon of heaven, or the firſt rule which heaven has equally diſtributed to all men, and which the ſaints have always obſerved, without turning either on the right hand, or on the left.

As rules do in brief contain the principal duties, and that we may eaſily retain them, CONFUCIUS gives five to thoſe that deſire to chuſe the good and adhere thereto.

1 IT is neceſſary, after an exact and extenſive manner, to know the cauſes, properties, and differences of all things.

2. BECAUSE that amongſt the things which are known, there may be ſome

which are not perfectly known, it is neceſſary careſully to examine them, to weigh them minutely and in every circumſtance, and thereon to conſult wiſe, intelligent and experienced men.

3. ALTHOUGH it ſeems that we clearly apprehend certain things, yet becauſe it is eaſy to tranſgreſs, through precipitancy, in the too much, or too little, it is neceſſary to meditate afterwards in particular, on the things we believe we know, and to weigh every thing by the weight of reaſon, with all the attentiveneſs of ſpirit, and with the utmoſt exactneſs, whereof we are capable.

4. IT is neceſſary to endeavour, not to apprehend things, after a confuſed manner, it is requiſite to have ſome clear ideas thereof, ſo that we may truly diſcern the good from the bad, the true from the falſe.

5. LASTLY, after that we ſhall have obſerved all theſe things, we muſt reduce to action, ſincerely and conſtantly perform and execute, to the utmoſt of our power, the good reſolutions which we have taken.

WE cannot better conclude this book, than with theſe excellent words of CUSU: take heed, ſaith he, how you act, when you are alone. Although you ſhould be retired into the moſt ſolitary, and moſt private place of thine houſe, you ought to do nothing, whereof you would be aſhamed if you were in company or in public. Have you a deſire, continues he, that I ſhould ſhew you after what manner he that has acquired ſome perfection governs himſelf? Why, he keeps a continual watch upon himſelf; he undertakes nothing, begins nothing, pronounces no word,

whereon he has not meditated. Before he raiſes any motion in his heart, he carefully obſerves himſelf, he reflects on every thing, he examines every thing, he is in a continual vigilance. Before he ſpeaks he is ſatisfied, that what he is about to utter is true and rational, and he thinks that he cannot reap a more pleaſant fruit from his vigilance and examination, than to accuſtom himſelf circumſpectly and wiſely to govern himſelf in the things which are neither ſeen nor known by any.

A

COLLECTION

OUT OF

Confucius's Works.

BOOK THIRD.

CONFUCIUS's third book is quite of another character than the two former, as to the method and expreſſions; but in the ground it contains the ſame morality. It is a contex-

ture of ſeveral ſentences pronounced at divers times, and at ſeveral places, by CONFUCIUS and his diſciples. Therefore it is intitled LUN YU, that is to ſay, diſcourſes of ſeveral perſons that reaſon and philoſophize together.

IN the firſt place there is repreſented a diſciple of this famous philoſopher, who declares, that he ſpent not a day wherein he rendered not an account to himſelf of theſe three things.

1. WHETHER he had not undertaken ſome affair for another, and whether he managed and followed it with the ſame eagerneſs and fidelity as if it had been his own concern.

2. IF when he has been with his friends, he has diſcourſed them ſincerely, if he has not ſatisfied himſelf with ſhewing them ſome ſlight appearance of kindneſs and eſteem.

3. WHETHER he has meditated on his maſter's doctrine; and whether after having meditated on it, he has uſed his utmoſt endeavours to reduce it to practiſe.

AFTERWARDS appears CONFUCIUS, giving leſſons to his diſciples. He tells them, that the wiſe ought to be ſo occupied with his virtue, that when he is in his houſe, he ought not to ſeek his conveniency and delight; that when he undertakes any affair, he ought to be diligent and exact, prudent and conſiderate in his words; and that though he have all theſe qualities, yet he ought to be the perſon on whom he ought leaſt to confide; he whom he ought leaſt to pleaſe: that in a word, the wiſe man always diſtruſting himſelf, ought always to conſult thoſe, whoſe virtue and wiſdom are known unto him, and to regu-

late his conduct and actions according to their counſels and examples.

WHAT think you of a poor man, ſays one of his diſciples to him, who being able to extenuate and diminiſh his poverty through flattery, refuſes to accept this offer, and courageouſly maintains, that none but cowards and low-ſpirited men do flatter? What think you of a rich man, who notwithſtanding his riches, is not proud? I ſay, replies CONFUCIUS, that they are both praiſeworthy, but that they are not to be conſidered, as if they were arrived at the higheſt degree of virtue. He that is poor, ought to be chearful, and content in the midſt of his indigence: behold wherein the virtue of the poor man conſiſts; and he that is rich, ought to do good to all: he that is of a poor and abject ſpirit, does good only to certain

perſons; certain paſſions, certain particular friendſhips cauſe him to act, his friendſhip is intereſted: he diſperſes his wealth only with a proſpect of reaping more than he ſows; he ſeeks only his own intereſt: but the love of the perfect man is an univerſal love, a love whoſe object is all mankind. A ſoldier of the kingdom of Ci, ſaid they unto him, loſt his buckler, and having a long time ſought after it in vain, he at laſt comforts himſelf, upon the loſs he had ſuſtained, with this reflexion; 'A ſoldier has loſt his buckler, but a ſoldier of our camp has found it, he will uſe it.' It had been much better ſpoken, replies CONFUCIUS, if he had ſaid, 'A man has loſt his buckler, but a man will find it;' thereby intimating, that we ought to have an affection for all the men of the world.

CONFUCIUS had a tender ſpirit, as may be judged by what we have ſaid, but it was great and ſublime. The ancient CHINESE taught, that there were two gods which preſided in their houſes, the one called NOAO, and the other CAO. The firſt was reſpected as the tutelar god of the whole family, and the laſt was only the god of the fire-hearth. Nevertheleſs, although the laſt of theſe genius's was very much inferiour to the firſt; yet to him were rendered greater honours than to him that had all the domeſtic affairs under his protection: and there was a proverb which implied, 'That is was better to ſeek the protec-'tion of CAO than of NOAO.' As this preference had ſomething very ſingular, and ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, even to encounter thoſe which were promoted to grandeur in princes courts; CON-

FUCIUS being in the kingdom of GUEZ, and meeting one day with a præfect, which had great authority in this kingdom, this miniſter, puffed up with the greatneſs of his fortune, ſuppoſing that the philoſopher deſigned to procure ſome favour from the King, demanded of him by way of merriment, the meaning of this proverb, ſo frequent in every ones mouth, 'It is better to 'ſeek the protection of CAO than of 'NOAO.' CONFUCIUS, who preſently perceived, that the præfect gave him to underſtand by his queſtion, that he ought to addreſs himſelf to him, if he would obtain this requeſt from the King his maſter, and who at the ſame inſtant, made this reflexion, that to gain the good will of a prince's favourite, it is neceſſary to offer incenſe even to his defects, and to force ones

ſelf to compliances, unworthy of a phiſopher, plainly told him, that he was wholly differing from the maxims of the age; that he would not addreſs himſelf to him, with any addreſs he wanted, to ſhew him that he ought to do it; and at the ſame time to adverti ſe him, that though he ſhould anſwer his queſtion, according to his deſire, he could reap no benefit thereby, he told him, 'That he that had ſinned againſt 'heaven, ſhould addreſs himſelf on-'ly to heaven.' For he adds, 'to whom 'can he addreſs himſelf to obtain the 'pardon of his crime, ſeeing that there 'is not any deity above heaven?"

CONFUCIUS recommends nothing ſo much to his diſciples as clemency and courteſy; always grounded upon this maxim, that we ought to love all men. And to make them better to apprehend

the truth of what he ſaid, he made an inſtance of two illuſtrious princes, that were diſtinguiſhed for this very thing in the kingdom of CUCHO. Theſe princes, ſaith he, were ſo mild and courteous, that they eaſily forgot the moſt hainous injuries, and horrible crimes, when the offenders ſhewed any ſign of repentance. They beheld theſe criminals, though worthy of the ſevereſt puniſhments, as if they had been innocent; they not ouly forgot their faults, but by their carriage, made even thoſe that had committed them, in ſomemeaſure to forget them, and looſe one part of thediſgrace, which remainsafter great lapſes, and which can only diſcourage in the way of virtue.

ONE of this philoſopher's great deſigns being to form princes to virtue, and to teach the art of reigning happily, he

made no difficulty of addreſſing himſelf directly to them, and of giving them counſel. A prince, ſaid he, one day to a king of Lu, called Timcum, a prince ought to be moderate, he ought not to contemn any of his ſubjects, he ought to recompence thoſe that deſerve it. There are ſome ſubjects that he ought to treat with mildneſs, and others with ſeverity; there are ſome on whoſe fidelity he ought to rely, but there are ſome alſo whom he cannot ſufficiently diſtruſt.

Confucius would have princes deſire nothing that other men wiſh for, although they are ſometimes good things, which it ſeems they might deſire without offence; he would have them to trample, as I may ſay, upon whatever may make the felicity of mortals upon earth; and eſpecially to look upon riches, children, and life itſelf, as tranſient advanta-

ges, and which conſequently cannot make the felicity of a prince. The emperor YAO, ſays this philoſopher, governed himſelf by theſe maxims, and under the conduct of ſo good a guide, he arrived at a perfection, whereunto few mortals can attain; for it may be ſaid, that he ſaw nothing above him but heaven, to which he was intirely conformable. This incomparable prince, adds he, from time to time viſited the provinces of his empire; and as he was the delight of his people, being met one day by a troop of his ſubjects; theſe ſubjects, after having called him their emperor and father, and after having teſtified their exceeding joy at the ſight of ſo great a prince, cried out with a loud voice, to join their wiſhes with their acclamations, 'Let heaven heap riches upon thee! 'Let it grant thee a numerous family!

'And let it not ſnatch thee from thy peo-
'ple, till thou art ſatisfied with days!'
'No, replies the emperor, ſend up o-
'ther petitions to heaven. Great riches
'produce great cares, and great inquie-
'tudes, a numerous progeny produce
'great fears! And a long life is general-
'ly a ſeries of misfortunes.' There are found few emperors like to YAO, cries CONFUCIUS after this.

THAT which generally occaſions trouble to kings, that which in ſome meaſure redoubles the weight of the burden annexed to their crown. is either the few ſubjects over which they reign, or the little wealth which they poſſeſs. For in brief, all kings are not great, all kings have not vaſt dominions and extenſive riches. But CONFUCIUS is of opinion, that a king is too ingenious to torment himſelf when theſe reflections are capa-

ble of cauſing the leaſt trouble in him. He ſays that a king has ſubjects enough, when his ſubjects are contented; and that his kingdom is rich enough, when peace and concord flouriſh there. 'Peace 'and concord,' ſaith this philoſopher, 'are the mothers of plenty.'

In fine, Confucius, in ſpeaking of the duties of princes, teaches, that it is ſo neceſſary for a prince to be virtuous, that when he is otherwiſe, a ſubject is obliged by the laws of heaven, voluntarily to baniſh himſelf, and to ſeek another country.

He ſometimes complains of the diſorders of princes; but the great ſubject of his complaints is, the extravagancies of private men. He bewails the morals of his age; he ſays, that he ſees almoſt no body that diſtinguiſhes himſelf, either by piety, or ſome extraordinary quality; that every one is corrupt-

ed, that every one is depraved, and that it is amongſt the magiſtrates and courtiers, chiefly, that virtue is neglected. It is true, that CONFUCIUS ſeems to extend things beyond reaſon. Indeed, it was not much for this philoſopher, when in a prince's court he found but ten or twelve perſons of an extraordinary wiſdom, to cry out, *O tempora! O mores!* Under VUVAM's reign, there were ten men of a conſummate virtue and ſufficiency, on whom this emperor might repoſe all the affairs of the empire: yet CONFUCIUS exlaims againſt ſo ſmall a number, ſaying, that great endowments, virtue, and the qualities of the ſpirit, are things very rare in his age. He had made the ſame complaints in reſpect of the emperor XUN, the firſt of the family of CHEU, although this prince had then five præfects, of whoſe merit ſome

judgment may be made by the hiſtory of one of theſe miniſters, whoſe name was YU.

THIS wiſe miniſter had rendered his memory immortal amongſt the CHINESE, not only becauſe it was he that invented the ſecret of ſtopping or diverting the waters that overflowed the whole kingdom, and which made it almoſt uninhabitable, but becauſe that being an emperor, he always lived like a philoſopher. He was of an illuſtrious family; for he could name ſome emperors of his anceſtors: but if by the decadency of his houſe, he was fallen from the pretenſions he might have to the empire, his wiſdom and virtue acquired him what fortune had refuſed to the nobility of his extraction. The emperor ZUN ſo thoroughly underſtood his deſert, that he aſſociated him to the empire: and ſeventeen years

after, he declared him his lawful ſucceſſor, even to the excluſion of his own ſon. Yu refuſed this honour, but as he vainly denied it, and that his generoſity might not ſuffer, in the preſſing ſollicitations that were made him on all hands, he withdrew from the court, and went to ſeek a retreat in a cell: but not being able ſo well to conceal himſelf, as not to remain undiſcovered in the rocks of his ſolitude, he was forceably advanced to the throne of his anceſtors. Never throne was more eaſy of acceſs than this prince, never prince was more affable. It is reported, that he one day left his dinner ten times, to peruſe the petitions that were preſented him, or to hear the complaints of the diſtreſſed: and that he ordinarily quitted his bath, when audience was demanded of him. He reigned ten years with ſo much ſucceſs, with ſo much

tranquillity, and in ſuch great abundance of all things, that of this age it may be truly ſaid, that it was a golden age. Yu was an 100 years old when he died; and he died as he had lived: for preferring the intereſt of the empire before that of his family, he would not let his ſon ſucceed him, he gave the crown to one of his ſubjects, whoſe virtue was known unto him. A prince, doubtleſs, is happy, when he can ſome time diſchrage himſelf of the cares which throw and preſs him on ſuch a miniſter: and ZUN only could be ſo, ſeeing that he at one time had five, all worthy of being ſeated on the throne: but this number was not great enough for CONFUCIUS, it is what made him to grieve.

CONFUCIUS ſays, that a prince ought never to accept the crown to the prejudice of his father, how unworthy ſoever

his father might be thereof; that it is one of the greateſt crimes whereof a prince can be guilty; and this occaſioned him to relate two little hiſtories, which ſuit admirably to his ſubject.

LIMCUM, ſays this philoſopher, was a king of GUEI, who was twice married. As chaſtity is not always the portion of princeſſes, the queen had unlawful familiarities with one of the nobles of his court; and this not being ſo privately managed, but one of LIMCUM's ſons by his firſt wife came to the knowledge of it, this young prince, jealous of his father's honour, ſo highly reſented it that he deſigned to kill the queen, which he concealed not. The cunning and guilty princeſs, who ſaw herſelf detected, and who had a great influence over her ancient ſpouſe, alledged ſuch plauſible reaſons, to make him believe her innocency,

that this poor prince, ſhutting his eyes againſt the truth, baniſhed his ſon; but as children are not culpable for their father's crimes, he kept CHE with him: he was the ſon of this diſgraced prince. LIMCUM died ſoon after. The people recalled the prince whom the queen's debaucheries had baniſhed; and he went to receive the crown, but his vicious ſon oppoſed him, alledging that his father was a parricide: he raiſed armies againſt him, and was proclaimed king by the people.

THE ſons of a king of CUCHO, continues he, followed not this way: behold a memorable example. This king, whoſe hiſtory we ſhall relate in two words, had three ſons: and as fathers have ſometimes more tenderneſs for their youngeſt children, than for the reſt, he had ſo much for the laſt which heaven had giv-

en him, that ſome days before his death, he appointed him for his ſucceſſor, to the excluſion of his other brothers. This procedure was ſo much the more extraordinary, as it was contrary to the laws of the land. The people thought after the king's death, that they might endeavour, without any crime, to advance the eldeſt of the royal family to the throne. This was executed as the people had projected it; and this action was generally approved. There was none but the new king, who remembering his father's dying words, refuſed to conſent. This generous prince took the crown that was preſented him, put it on his younger brother's head, and nobly declared that he renounced it, and thought himſelf unworthy of it, ſeeing that he had been excluded by his father's will, and that his father could not retract

what he had done. The brother, touched with ſuch an heroic action, conjured him the ſame moment, not to oppoſe the inclination of all the people, who deſired him to reign over them. He alledged that it was he alone, that was the lawful ſucceſſor to the crown, which he contemned; that their father could not violate the laws of the ſtate; that this prince was overtaken with a too great fondneſs, and that in a word, it in ſome meaſure belonged to the people to redreſs the laws of their kings, when they were not juſt. But nothing could perſuade him to act contrary to his father's will. Between theſe two princes, there was a laudable conteſtation; neither would accept the crown: and they ſeeing, that this conteſt would continue a long time, withdrew from the court; and vanquiſhed and victorious together, they

went to end their days in the repoſe of a ſolitude, and left the kingdom to their brother. Theſe princes, adds he, ſought after virtue: but they ſought it not in vain, for they found it.

He frequently relates ſhort hiſtories of this nature, wherein an heroic generoſity is every where ſeen to diſcover itſelf. The women amongſt the people, and even great princeſſes, are therein obſerved rather to chuſe death, and that with their own hands, than to be expoſed to the violence of their raviſhers. The magiſtrates are there ſeen to quit the greateſt employs to avoid the diſorders of the court; philoſophers to cenſure kings upon their throne, and princes who make no difficulty to die, to appeaſe the anger of heaven, and procure peace to their people.

After this Confucius ſhews how

the dead ought to be buried; and as this was performed in his time with a great deal of magnificence, ſo in funeral pomps he blames whatever ſeems like oſtentation, and reproves it after a ſeverè manner. Indeed, one of his diſciples being dead, and this diſciple being buried with the uſual magnificence, he cried out when he knew it, 'When my diſciple was alive, 'he reſpected me as his father, and I 'looked upon him as my ſon: but can I 'now behold him as my ſon, ſince he has 'been buried like other men?'

He prohibits the bewailing the dead with exceſs; and if, conſtrained by his own grief, he ſhed tears for this very diſciple, he confeſſed he forgot himſelf; that in truth, great griefs have no bounds, but that the wiſe man ought not to be overcome with grief; that it is a weakneſs, it is a crime in him.

He gives great praiſes to ſome of his diſciples, who, in the midſt of the greateſt poverty, were content with their condition; and accounted as great riches the natural virtues they had received from heaven.

He declaims againſt pride, ſelf-love, indiſcretion, and againſt the ridiculous vanity of thoſe that affect to be maſters every where, againſt thoſe ſelf-conceited men, who momentarily cite their own actions, and againſt great talkers, and drawing afterwards the portraiture of the wiſe man, in oppoſition to what he has diſcourſed, he ſays, that humility, modeſty, gravity, and neighbourly affection, are virtues which he cannot one moment neglect, without departing from his character.

He ſays, that a good man never afflicts himſelf, and fears nothing; that

he contemns injuries, credits not reproaches, and refuſes even to hear reports.

He maintains, that puniſhments are too common; that if the magiſtrates were good men, the wicked would conform their lives to theirs, and that if princes would only advance to dignities, perſons diſtinguiſhed by their honeſty, and exemplary life, every one would apply himſelf unto virtue, becauſe that grandeur being that which all men naturally deſire, every one willing to poſſeſs it, would endeavour to render himſelf worthy thereof.

He would have us avoid idleneſs; to be ſerious, and not precipitate in our anſwers; and that ſetting ourſelves above every thing, we ſhould never be troubled either that we are contemned, or not known in the world.

HE compares hypocrites to thoſe lewd villains, who the better to conceal their deſigns from the eyes of men, do appear wiſe and modeſt in the day time, and who by the favour of the night, do rob houſes, and commit the moſt infamous robberies.

HE ſays, that thoſe that make their belly their god, never do any thing worthy of a man; that they are rather brutes than rational creatures: and returning to the conduct of the great ones, he very well remarks, that their crimes are always greater than the crimes of other men. ZAM, the laſt emperor of the family of CHEU, ſays CONFUCIUS, on this occaſion, had a very irregular conduct. But how irregular ſoever his conduct was, the diſorders of this emperor were only the diſorders of his age. Nevertheleſs, when any debauch-

ed, criminal, and infamous action is mentioned, they ſay it is, 'the crime of 'ZAM.' The reaſon whereof is this, ZAM was wicked and an emperor.

CONFUCIUS relates an infinite number of other things of this nature, which concern the conduct of all ſorts of men; but moſt of the things that he ſays, or what his diſciples do ſay, are ſentences and maxims, as we have already declared, the moſt conſiderable of which are theſe that follow.

MAXIMS.

I.

ENDEAVOUR to imitate the wiſe, and never diſcourage thyſelf, how laborious ſoever it may be: if thou canſt arrive at thine end, the pleaſure you will enjoy will recompence all thy pains.

II.

WHEN thou laboureſt for others, do it with the ſame zeal as if it were for thyſelf.

III.

VIRTUE which is not ſupported with gravity, gains no repute amongſt men.

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VIRTUE which is not ſupported with gravity, gains no repute amongſt men.

IV.

ALWAYS remember thou art a man, that human nature is frail, and that thou mayeſt eaſily fall, and thou ſhalt never fall. But, if happening to forget what thou art, thou chanceſt to fall, be not diſcouraged; remember that thou mayeſt riſe again; that it is in thy power to break the bands which join thee to thine offence, and to ſubdue the obſtacles which hinder thee from walking in the paths of virtue.

V.

TAKE heed that thy promiſes be juſt, for having once promiſed, it is not lawful to retract: we ought always to keep our promiſe.

VI.

WHEN thou doſt homage to any one,

ſee that thy ſubmiſſions be proportioned to the homage thou oweſt him: there is ſtupidity and pride in doing too little; but in over acting it there is abjection and hypocriſy.

VII.

EAT not for the pleaſure thou mayeſt find therein. Eat to increaſe thy ſtrength; eat to preſerve the life which thou haſt received from heaven.

VIII.

LABOUR to purify thy thoughts: if thy thoughts are not ill, neither will thy actions be ſo.

IX.

THE wiſe man has an infinity of pleaſures; for virtue has its delights in the midſt of the ſeverities that attend it.

X.

He that in his ſtudies wholly applies himſelf to labour and exerciſe, and neglects meditation, loſes his time: and he that only applies himſelf to meditation, and neglects labour and exerciſe, does only wander and loſe himſelf. The firſt can never know any thing exactly, his lights will be always intermixed with doubts and obſcurities; and the laſt will only purſue ſhadows; his knowledge will never be certain, it will never be ſolid. Labour, but ſlight not meditation: meditate, but ſlight not labour.

XI.

A prince ought to puniſh vice, for fear leſt he ſeem to maintain it: but yet he ought to keep his people in their duty, rather by the effects of clemency, than by menaces and puniſhments.

XII.

NEVER ſlacken fidelity to thy prince; conceal nothing from him which it is his intereſt to know; and think nothing difficult, when it tends to obey him.

XIII.

WHEN we cannot apply any remedy to an evil, it is in vain to ſeek it. If by thy advices and remonſtrances, thou couldſt undo what is already done, thy ſilence would be criminal; but there is nothing colder than advice, by which it is impoſſible to profit.

XIV.

POVERTY and human miſeries are evils in themſelves, but the wicked only reſent them. It is a burden under which they groan, and which makes them at laſt to ſink; they even diſtaſte the beſt fortune. It is the wiſe man only who

is always pleaſed: virtue renders his ſpirit quiet: nothing troubles him, nothing diſquiets him, becauſe he practiſes not virtue for a reward. The practice of virtue is the ſole recompence he expects.

XV.

It is only the good man, who can make a right choice; who can either love or hate with reaſon, or as need requires.

XVI.

He that applies himſelf to virtue, and ſtrongly addicts himſelf thereto, never commits any thing unbecoming a man, nor contrary to right reaſon.

XVII.

Riches and honours are good; the deſire of poſſeſſing them is natural to all men: but if theſe good things agree

not with virtue, the wiſe man ought to contemn, and generouſly to renounce them. On the contrary, poverty and ignominy are evils; man naturally avoids them; if theſe evils attack the wiſe man, it is lawful for him to rid himſelf from them, but it is not lawful to do it by a crime.

XVIII.

I NEVER as yet ſaw a man that was happy in his virtue, or afflicted with his defects and weakneſſes; but I am not ſurpriſed, becauſe I would have him that delights in virtue, to find ſo many charms therein, that for it he ſhould contemn the pleaſures of the world: and on the contrary, that he who hates vice, ſhould find it ſo hideous, that he ſhould uſe all ways to keep himſelf from falling therein.

XIX.

IT is not credible that he who uſes his utmoſt endeavours to acquire virtue, ſhould not obtain it at laſt, although he ſhould labour but one ſingle day. I never yet ſaw the man that wanted ſtrength for this purpoſe.

XX.

HE that in the morning hath heard the voice of virtue, may die at night. This man will not repent of living, and death will not be any pain unto him.

XXI.

HE that ſeeks pride in his habits, and loves not frugality, is not diſpoſed for the ſtudy of wiſdom; thou oughteſt not even to hold correſpondence with him.

XXII.

AFFLICT not thyſelf for that thou

art not promoted to grandeur and public dignities; rather grieve for that thou art not, perhaps, adorned with thoſe virtues that might render thee worthy of being advanced.

XXIII.

THE good man employs himſelf only with his virtue, the wicked only with his riches. The firſt continually thinks upon the good and intereſt of the ſtate; but the laſt has other cares, he only thinks on what concerns himſelf.

XXIV.

Do unto another as thou wouldſt be dealt with thyſelf: thou only needeſt this law alone; it is the foundation and principal of all the reſt.

XXV.

THE wiſe man has no ſooner caſt his

eyes upon a good man, but he endeavours to imitate his virtues; but the ſame wiſe man has no ſooner fixed his ſight upon a man given up to his vices, but miſtruſting himſelf, interrogates himſelf in a trembling manner, if he be not like that man.

XXVI.

A CHILD is obliged to ſerve and obey his father. Parents have their failures: a child is obliged to acquaint them therewith, but he ought to do it with moderation and prudence: and if whatever precautions he takes, he always meet with oppoſition, he ought to reſt a while, but never deſiſt. Counſels given to parents do frequently draw puniſhments and ſeverities upon the child; but on this account he ought to ſuffer, not to murmur.

XXVII.

THE wiſe man never haſtens, neither in his ſtudies nor in his words; he is ſometimes as it were mute; but when it concerns him to act, and practiſe virtue, he, as I may ſay, precipitates all.

XXVIII.

THE truly wiſe man ſpeaks little, he is little eloquent. I ſee not, that eloquence can be of very great uſe to him.

XXIX.

A LONG experience is required to know the heart of man. I imagined, when I was young, that all men were ſincere; that they always practiſed what they ſaid; in a word, that their mouth always agreed with their heart: but now that I behold things with another

eye, I am convinced, that I was miſtaken. At preſent I hear what men ſay, but I never rely thereon, I will examine whether their words are agreeable to their actions.

XXX.

In the kingdom of Ci there was formerly a præfect that ſlew his king: another præfect of the ſame kingdom, beholding with horror the crime of this parricide, quitted his dignity, forſook his wealth, and retired into another kingdom. This wiſe miniſter was not ſo happy as to find at firſt what he ſought after; in this new kingdom he only found wicked miniſters, little devoted to their maſter's intereſt. This, ſaith he, ſhall not be the place of my abode, I will elſewhere ſeek a retreat. But always meeting with men like to that perfidious miniſter, who by his

crime had forced him to abandon his country, dignity, and all his eſtate, he went through the whole earth. If thou demandeſt my thoughts concerning ſuch a man, I cannot refuſe telling you, that he deſerves great praiſe, and that he had a very remarkable virtue. This is the judgment that every rational man ought to make thereof. But as we are not the ſearchers of hearts, and as it is properly in the heart, that true virtue reſides, I know not whether his virtue was a true virtue; we ought not always to judge of men by their outward actions.

XXXI.

I KNOW a man, who paſſes for ſincere in the people's mind, who was aſked for ſomething that he had not. Thou imagineſt, perhaps, that he inge-

nuouſly confeſſed, that it was not in his power to grant what was aſked of him. He ought to do it, if his ſincerity had anſwered the report it had amongſt the people: but behold how he took it. He went directly to a neighbour's houſe; he borrowed of him what was requeſted of himſelf, and afterwards gave it him. I cannot convince myſelf that this man can be ſincere.

XXXII.

REFUSE not what is given thee by thy prince, what riches ſoever thou poſſeſſeſt. Give thy ſuperfluities to the poor.

XXXIII.

THE defects of parents ought not to be imputed to their children. Becauſe that a father ſhall, by his crimes, render himſelf unworthy of being promot-

ed to honour, the ſon ought not to be excluded, if he renders not himſelf unworthy. Becauſe that a ſon ſhall be of an obſcure birth, his birth ought not to be his crime, he ought to be called to great employments, as well as the ſons of the nobles, if he has the qualifications neceſſary. Our fathers heretofore ſacrificed victims only of a certain colour, and pitched upon theſe colours according to the will of thoſe that ſat upon the throne. Under the reign of one of our emperors, the red colour was in vogue. Think you, that the deities, to which our fathers ſacrificed under this emperor's reign, would reject a red bull, becauſe it came from a cow of another colour?

XXXIV.

PREFER poverity and baniſhment to

the moſt eminent offices of ſtate, when it is a wicked man that offers them, and would conſtrain thee to accept them.

XXXV.

THE way that leads to virtue is long, but it is thy duty to finiſh this long race. Alledge not for thy excuſe, that thou haſt not ſtrength enough; that difficulties diſcourage thee, and that thou ſhalt be at laſt forced to ſtop in the midſt of the courſe. Thou knoweſt nothing, begin to run: it is a ſign thou haſt not as yet begun, thou ſhouldeſt not uſe this language.

XXXVI.

IT is not enough to know virtue, it is neceſſary to love it; but it it not ſufficient to love it, it is neceſſary to poſſeſs it.

XXXVII.

HE that perſecutes a good man, makes war againſt heaven: heaven created virtue, and protects it; he that perſecutes it, perſecutes heaven.

XXXVIII.

A MAGISTRATE ought to honour his father and mother; he ought never to faulter in this juſt duty; his example ought to inſtruct the people. He ought not to contemn old perſons, nor perſons of merit: the people may imitate him.

XXXIX.

A CHILD ought to be under a continual apprehenſion of doing ſomething that may diſpleaſe his father; this fear ought always to poſſeſs him. In a word, he ought to act, in whatever he undertakes, with ſo much precaution,

that he may never offend him, or afflict him.

XL.

GREATNESS of ſpirit, power and perſeverance, ought to be the portion of the wiſe. The burden wherewith he is loaded is weighty, his courſe is long.

XLI.

THE wiſe man never acts without counſel. He ſometimes conſults, in the moſt important affairs, even the leaſt intelligent perſons, men that have the leaſt ſpirit, and the leaſt experience. When counſels are good, we ought not to conſider from whence they come.

XLII.

ESCHEW vanity and pride. Although thou hadſt all the prudence and ability of the ancients, if thou haſt not humility, thou haſt nothing, thou art even

the man of the world that deſerves to be contemned.

XLIII.

LEARN what thou knoweſt already, as if thou hadſt never learned it: things are never ſo well known but that we may forget them.

XLIV.

Do nothing that is unhandſome, although thou ſhouldeſt have art enough to make thine action approved: thou mayeſt eaſily deceive the eyes of men, but thou canſt never deceive heaven, its eyes are too penetrative and clear.

XLV.

NEVER contract friendſhip with a man that is not better than thyſelf.

XLVI.

THE wiſe man bluſhes at his faults, but is not aſhamed to amend them.

XLVII.

He that lives without envy and covetouſneſs may aſpire at every thing.

XLVIII.

Wouldst thou learn to die well? learn firſt to live well.

XLIX.

A minister of ſtate never ought to ſerve his prince in his extravagancies and injuſtice. He ought rather to renounce his office, than to tarniſh it by baſe and criminal actions.

L.

Innocence ceaſes to be a virtue, moſt of the great ones are fallen therefrom. But if thou demandeſt what muſt be done to recover this virtue; I anſwer, that it is neceſſary to conquer thyſelf. If all mortals could, in one

day, gain over themſelves this happy victory, the whole univerſe would, from this very day, re-aſſume a new form; we ſhould all be perfect, we ſhould all be innocent. It is true, the victory is difficult, but it is not impoſſible; for in ſhort, to conquer thyſelf, is only to do what is agreeable to reaſon. Turn away thine eyes, ſtop thine ears, put a bridle upon thy tongue, and rather remain in an eternal inaction, than to imploy thine eyes in beholding ſights where reaſon is ſtifled, than to give attention thereunto, or to diſcourſe thereon. Behold how thou mayſt overcome! The victory depends on thyſelf alone.

LI.

DESIRE not the death of thine enemy, thou wouldſt deſire it in vain; his life is in the hands of heaven.

LII.

IT is eaſy to obey the wiſe, he commands nothing impoſſible: but it is hard to divert him therefrom: that which often times rejoices others makes him to ſigh, and forces torrents of tears from his eyes.

LIII.

ACKNOWLEDGE thy benefits by the return of other benefits, but never revenge injuries.

LIV.

IN what part of the world ſoever thou art forced to ſpend thy life, correſpond with the wiſeſt, aſſociate with the beſt men.

LV.

To ſin and not to repent, is properly to ſin.

LVI.

IT is good to faſt ſome times, to give

thy mind to meditation, and to the ſtudy of virtue. The wiſe man is taken up with other cares, than with the continual cares of his nouriſhment. The beſt cultivated earth fruſtrates the hopes of the labourer, when the ſeaſons are irregular: all the rules of husbandry could not ſecure him from death, in the time of a hard famine: but virtue is never fruitleſs.

LVII.

THE wiſe man muſt learn to know the heart of man, to the end that taking every one according to his own inclination, he may not labour in vain, when he ſhall diſcourſe to him of virtue. All men ought not to be inſtructed after the ſame way. There are divers paths that lead to virtue, the wiſe man ought not to be ignorant of them.

LVIII.

COMBAT night and day againſt thy vices; and if by thy cares and vigilance, thou gainſt the victory over thyſelf, courageouſly attack the vices of others, but attack them not before this be done: there is nothing more ridiculous than to complain of others' defects, when we have the very ſame.

LIX.

THE good man ſins ſometimes, weakneſs is natural to him: but he ought to watch ſo diligently over himſelf, that he never fall twice into the ſame crime.

LX.

WE have three friends that are uſeful to us, a ſincere friend, a faithful friend, a friend that hears every thing, that examines what is told him, and that ſpeaks little: but we have three al-

ſo whoſe friendſhip is pernicious, a hypocrite, a flatterer, and a great talker.

LXI.

He that applies himſelf to virtue, has three enemies to conflict, which he muſt ſubdue; incontinence when he is as yet in the vigour of his age, and the blood boils in his veins; conteſts and diſputes when he is arrived at a mature age, and covetouſneſs when he is old.

LXII.

There are three things that the wiſe man ought to reverence, the laws of heaven, great men, and the words of good men.

LXIII.

We may have an averſion for an enemy, without deſiring revenge. The motions of nature are not always criminal.

LXIV.

DISTRUST a flatterer, a man affected in his diſcourſes, and who every where boaſts of his eloquence. This is not the character of true virtue.

LXV.

SILENCE is abſolutely neceſſary to the wiſe man. Great diſcourſes, elaborate diſcourſes, pieces of eloquence, ought to be a language unknown to him, his actions ought to be his language. As for me, I would never ſpeak more. Heaven ſpeaks, but what language does it uſe, to preach to men, that there is a ſovereign principle from whence all things depend; a ſovereign principle which makes them to act and move? Its motion is its language, it reduces the ſeaſons to their time, it agitates nature, it make it produce: this ſilence is eloquent.

LXVI.

THE wiſe man ought to hate ſeveral ſorts of men. HE ought to hate thoſe that divulge the defects of others, and take delight in diſcourſing thereon. He ought to hate thoſe that being adorned only with very mean qualities, and who being moreover of a low birth, do revile and temeariouſly murmur againſt thoſe that are promoted to dignities of ſtate. He ought to hate a valiant man, when his valour is not accompanied with civility, nor prudence. He ought to hate thoſe ſorts of men that are puffed up with ſelf-love; who being always conceited of their own merit, and idolaters of their own opinions, do aſſault all, deride all, and never conſult reaſon. He ought to hate thoſe who having very ſmall illuminations, do preſume to cenſure what others do. He ought to hate

proud men. In a word, he ought to hate thoſe who make it a cuſtom to ſpie out others' defects to publiſh them.

LXVII.

It is very difficult to aſſociate with the populace. Theſe ſort of men grow familiar and inſolent when we have too much correſpondence with them: and becauſe they imagine they are ſlighted, when never ſo little neglected, we draw their averſion upon us.

LXVIII.

He that is arrived at the fortieth year of his age, and who has hitherto been a ſlave to ſome criminal habit, is not in a condition to ſubdue it. I hold his malady incurable, he will perſevere in his crime until death.

LXIX.

Afflict not thyſelf at the death of a

brother. Death and life are in the power of heaven, to which the wiſe man is bound to ſubmit. Moreover, all the men of the earth are thy brethren; why then ſhouldſt thou weep for one, at a time when ſo many others remain alive?

LXX.

THE natural light is only a perpetual conformity of our ſoul with the laws of heaven. Men can never loſe this light. It is true, that the heart of man being inconſtant and wavering, it is ſometimes covered over with ſo many clouds, that it ſeems wholly extinguiſhed. The wiſe man experiences it himſelf: for he may fall into ſmall errors, and commit light offences: yet the wiſe man cannot be virtuous, whilſt he is in

this ſtate, it would be a contradiction to ſay it.

LXXI.

IT is very difficult, when poor, not to hate poverty: but it is poſſible to be rich without being proud.

LXXII.

THE men of the firſt ages applied themſelves to learning and knowledge, only for themſelves, that is to ſay, to become virtuous: this was all the praiſe they expected from their labours and lucubrations. But men at preſent do only ſeek praiſe, they ſtudy only out of vanity, and to paſs for learned in the eſteem of men.

LXXIII.

THE wiſe man ſeeks the cauſe of his defects in himſelf: but the fool avoiding himſelf, ſeeks it in all other beſides himſelf.

LXXIV.

THE wiſe man ought to have a ſevere gravity, but it ought not to be fierce and untractable. He ought to love ſociety, but to avoid great aſſemblies.

LXXV.

THE love or hatred of people, ought not to be the rule of thy love or hatred; examine whether they have reaſon.

LXXVI.

CONTRACT friendſhip with a man whoſe heart is upright and ſincere; with a man that loves to learn, and who can teach thee ſomething, in his turn. Other men are unworthy of thy friendſhip.

LXXVII.

HE that has faults, and ſtrives not to amend them, ought at leaſt to do his endeavour to conceal them. The wiſe

man's defects are like the eclipſes of the ſun, they come to every ones knowledge. The wiſe man ought upon this account to endeavour to cover himſelf with a cloud. I ſay the ſame thing of princes.

LXXVIII.

READILY abandon thy country when virtue is there depreſſed, and vice encouraged. But if thou deſigneſt not to renounce the maxims of the age, in thy retreat and exile, remain in thy miſerable country; for what reaſon ſhouldſt thou leave it?

LXXIX.

WHEN thy country's ſafety is concerned, ſtand not to conſult, but expoſe thyſelf.

LXXX.

HEAVEN ſhortens not the life of man, it is man that does it by his own crimes.

Thou mayſt avoid the calamities that come from heaven, but thou canſt never eſcape thoſe which thou draweſt upon thyſelf by thy crimes.

Read in Jan.y 1788.

FINIS.

It is much easier to give an Advice than to take it.

P.S.V.